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ABSTRACT

This report presents analysis, findings, and recommendations from a study of certain members of the "new wave" immigrant population, specifically Southeast Asian women, Haitian women, and Hispanic women. After an executive summary of the study's objectives, background, and findings, the two phases of the project are described: (1) the collection and analysis of the available data to produce a population profile of the groups; and (2) the holding of dialogues between service providers and members of the immigrant groups. The dialogues, which were held in communities with high concentrations of the new wave populations, centered on the identification of specific problems and concrete solutions. Chapters 1 to 3, which discuss Southeast Asian refugees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and Hispanic immigrants, include gross population profiles, selected demographic and socio-economic characteristics, labor force and economic characteristics, utilization of social support services, and specific problems encountered by the immigrant groups. These chapters provide selected essays on particular problems facing the immigrant groups and sub-populations. Chapter 4 discusses programs and policies related to helping new wave women enter the workforce. Chapter 5 presents major report recommendations in the areas of providing training programs; improving Job Training Partnership Act programs; providing child care and transportation; improving the collection of data; planning with diversity in mind; expanding mental health services; creating housing; improving the nature and delivery of welfare benefits; clarifying the legal status of entrants; and reconsidering the plight of undocumented Hispanic women. Appendices include data sources and information on the legal status of newcomers. (HB)

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In America and in Need:

Immigrant, Refugee, and Entrant Women

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In America and in Need:

Immigrant, Refugee, and Entrant Women

by Abby Spero

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective

The first objective of the study was to collect information about certain members of the "new wave" immigrant population, specifically, Southeast Asian women, Haitian women, and Hispanic women. These women were selected as the focus of the study because they have entered the United States in large numbers and under extraordinary circumstances since 1980, and the initial survey of the data available for them revealed how meager the data collection and coordination efforts have been and how crucial increased efforts are to ensure effective and appropriate social planning. The first objective, then, was to find out what is known and what is not known about these women, with special emphasis given to their labor force status. The second objective was to use these findings as the basis for recommendations for improving the policies and programs that relate to the women's economic and social adjustment.

Background

The study was funded by the Women's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, and was conducted by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges in two phases. During the first phase, research studies were collected and analyzed for the purpose of developing a statistical portrait of America's most recent arrivals. The second phase of the study involved gathering information at the local level through three dialogues that were held at sites throughout the country, providing forums for service providers, community-based organizations, and members of the newcomer population. While the inclusion of the newcomer women themselves has been strongly recommended in many reports, these dialogues appear to be unique in their achievement of this goal.

Findings

- Members of the newcomer population may come from very different countries and backgrounds, and they may have different legal statuses once they are admitted into the United States, but the commonality of their needs is remarkable.

- These women need to be employed. Some of them are single heads of household, and others are one of two workers whose incomes are needed to support a large household. Thus, their economic survival and the survival of their families depend upon their ability to obtain employment.

- Many of these women are in the labor force, but they have dead-end, minimum-wage jobs that force them to remain dependent upon cash assistance programs and other forms of support. These employed women are the lucky ones—compared to their unemployed counterparts whose present chances of achieving economic self-sufficiency are virtually nonexistent.

- The major reason the women are "ghettoized" in dead-end jobs or locked out of employment opportunities altogether is that their mastery of English is severely limited. The problem, one confirmed by studies of labor force variables and expert testimony, is that employers base their hiring and promotion decisions upon workers' English-language skills. The better the person speaks and understands English, the more likely she is to find and keep a job. While some of these women neither speak nor understand any English after having lived in America for several years, most do, but at a minimal level of proficiency. Their limited facility with the English language is understandable in light of the fact that most came here knowing no English, some are illiterate in their native languages, and others are nonliterate. Furthermore, many orientation and employment programs emphasize placing the women in jobs as quickly as possible, which is achieved at the cost of their mastering the English skills they need to achieve genuine, long-term economic self-sufficiency.

- Aggravating this situation is the fact that the women do not possess job skills transferable to their receiving economy. Many of them worked outside of the home in their countries of origin, but their work experience in rural, agricultural societies did not prepare them for employment in an urban, industrialized environment. Thus, they are ill equipped to do any work other than unskilled labor—the jobs that force them to remain dependent upon welfare. Furthermore, the major source of occupational training needed by newcomer women, which is programs authorized by the Job Training Partnership Act, frequently excludes them; this situation grows out of the decision made by some local service deliverers to select as clients the persons who are most easily placed in jobs.

- Even if their mastery of English and vocational skills were sufficient for employment, these women would not know how to get and keep a job in America. Reading "help wanted" advertisements, filling out application forms, calling the employer if they cannot work that day—all of these are foreign concepts to newcomer women.

- Another obstacle to the women's assimilation is their incomplete social adjustment. Not only must they cope with extreme culture shock and the traumas attendant upon the circumstances of their arrival to the United States, they must do it within the context of changing family and community structures. The easiest social adjustment is accomplished by those women who need "only" to become oriented to their new culture and to master survival skills, such as using the local mass transit system. However, for many women "social adjustment" means more than acculturation. It means coping with severe depression or domestic violence, just two of the symptoms of the multiple stresses in their lives. The problems stem from both their experiences prior to arriving in the United States, such as the rape of the female "boat people," and their experiences after resettlement, such as family and generational conflicts precipitated by changes in family members' roles and differing attitudes towards their new culture.

- Some appropriate training and employment opportunities do exist, but the women cannot take advantage of them because they do not have access to child care and transportation. They have no one to care for their children, or they cannot afford to pay for child care services on their limited incomes. Lack of transportation is an obstacle for similar reasons—no car and no money to pay for gas or bus fare.

- While the circumstances described above apply to the majority of newcomer women, there are also women who have special needs: professional women who need to be recertified, elderly women who are isolated in their homes, young women whose education was interrupted by war, homeless women who have no place to sleep at night, and women for whom welfare policies constitute a disincentive to work.

- An obstacle to serving all newcomer women is the dearth of data that can be used to help frame effective policies and programs. Typically, data collection efforts at the national level do not disaggregate the data by sex. Thus, the information sought by policy makers is not available to the extent it is needed.

Recommendations

- Create training opportunities appropriate to the needs of the majority of newcomer women. These programs should provide instruction in English, vocational skills, job-getting and job-keeping skills, and acculturation and survival skills. Furthermore, they must be of sufficient duration, perhaps a minimum of one year, so that the women have time to master all of the skills they need to achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency.

- Make Job Training Partnership Act programs viable sources of occupational training for newcomer women. This means encouraging the local decision-making bodies, which are the Private Industry Councils, to consider the special needs of these women in designing programs. Features which newcomer women need and which are authorized by the law, including supportive services, should be incorporated into these programs.

- Create training opportunities to meet the special needs of some women. These special needs include professional recertification, English classes for preliterate and nonliterate women, and classes specially designed for older women.

- Eliminate false barriers to training and employment opportunities. This means increasing the availability of affordable and accessible child care services, as well as planning service delivery with the women's transportation in mind.

- Make culturally appropriate mental health services available to women whose social and emotional adjustment is incomplete.

- Improve data collection efforts by disaggregating the data by sex.

The obstacles facing Southeast Asian women, Haitian women, and Hispanic women will not disappear of their own accord. These women are in need. If policies and programs for facilitating their movement toward economic self-sufficiency were developed and implemented today, then tomorrow they could become contributing members of American society.

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*Note: The reader needs to know that the titles of the tables in this report were written following these guidelines: Unless "FY" (fiscal year) appears in the title, the data are for calendar years or whatever specific period is named. Second, except for cases in which a specific city is named in the title, the data reflect the population in the United States. Last, the word "admissions" appears in titles to differentiate figures for new arrivals from the total, or cumulative, population.

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PREFACE

In America and in Need: Immigrant, Refugee, and Entrant Women is the final report of the Immigrant Women Project. The impetus behind the project was the realization on the part of the Women's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, that America has received thousands of foreign-born women since 1980 and that there is no clear understanding of their status in the labor force and their movement toward economic self-sufficiency. Thus, the Women's Bureau contracted with the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges to conduct a study of the recently arrived women.

The focus of the study was Southeast Asian, Haitian, and Hispanic women, all members of the so-called new wave immigrant population which entered the United States in large numbers and under extraordinary circumstances in and after 1980. The Women's Bureau recommended this focus because an initial survey of available data for these groups revealed how inadequate the data collection efforts have been and how necessary increased efforts are to ensure effective and appropriate social planning. The purpose of the Immigrant Women Project, then, was to collect the information needed for framing policies and implementing programs that are intended to facilitate the assimilation of the newcomer women.

The project was conducted in two phases. During the first phase, all of the readily available data--that is, the kinds of information available to a researcher in Washington, D.C.--were collected and analyzed to produce a population profile. In the second phase, three dialogues were held, each in a community where one of the new wave populations is concentrated. The dialogues brought together service providers and members of the new wave populations, who are of course the people with the best knowledge of the needs and concerns of the newcomer women, for a discussion that centered on the identification of specific problems and concrete solutions. Although the two phases differed in method, both sought answers to the same questions: Are the women in the labor force? If not, why not? What are the obstacles to their entrance into the labor force, and how can the obstacles be overcome?

This report presents the findings of the study. It is organized into five chapters. The first three chapters discuss Southeast Asian refugees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and Hispanic immigrants, in that order. Each chapter begins with the population profile of the group or groups and then continues with the dialogue proceedings. Chapter 4 describes and evaluates the programs and policies that currently exist to help the newcomer women adjust to their new society and become productive and content citizens. In Chapter 5, recommendations addressing the key issues identified in the preceding chapters are made.

While is is hoped that In America and in Need is the most current and comprehensive resource on Southeast Asian refugee women, Cuban and Haitian entrant women, and Hispanic immigrant women, the report does not presume to be an exhaustive investigation of these newcomer groups. It has its limitations, ones imposed by the financial and time restrictions of the Immigrant Women Project. First, a financial constraint prohibited conducting a fourth dialogue which could have considered the situation of Cuban entrants. Second, because there were only three months to collect and report data for the newcomer women, the collection effort was necessarily limited. Compounding this situation was the fact that all of the information had to be gathered through an informal "networking" process because no central clearinghouse on immigration and refugee affairs exists. It is believed, however, that in spite of these difficulties most, if not all, of the large-scale studies and other significant research efforts were identified. Therefore, the reader should understand that the unevenness in the level of reporting here reflects the varying levels of activity in the field; for that reason, for example, the section on Southeast Asian refugee women is the longest of the three only because more research has been done on this population.

In sum, *In America and in Need: Immigrant, Refugee, and Entrant Women* is not intended to be the "last word," to end the discussion of the circumstances and needs of America's most recent arrivals. On the contrary, its goal is to initiate discussion—informed and reasonable discussion that can lead to improved policies and programs. If it does that, it is due to the efforts of several people, whom I would like now to acknowledge. First, Dr. B. Meredith Burke, demographer and consultant to the first phase of the Immigrant Women Project, was responsible for much of the original data collection and analysis; her voice can be heard still in some of the report's sentences and phrases. I would like also to thank the local coordinators of the dialogues: Ding-Jo Currie, Long Beach City College; Gertrude Keyser, Miami-Dade Community College; and Lucy Willis, Texas Southmost College. With the support of their planning committees and the colleges, these talented women organized three outstanding conferences. Thanks are due also to the staff of the Women's Bureau—particularly Dr. Collis Phillips, Roberta McKay, Deloress Crockett, and Rhobia Taylor—for their support of the project. Gail Porter, Women's Bureau, has earned my gratitude and respect for her contribution. Finally, Frances E. Holland's careful and thoughtful preparation of the manuscript is gratefully acknowledged.

Abby Spero
Project Director

Chapter I

SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEES

Gross Population Profile

Peak Year of Admissions: 1980

The second wave of Southeast Asian refugees peaked at 166,727 in fiscal year 1980 (FY 1980). While the following year was also witness to a significant influx of refugees, by FY 1982 the number of new arrivals had dropped to 72,155. The dramatic increases and subsequent decreases in the number of Southeast Asians admitted to the United States since 1975 are presented in Table 1.01.

Ethnic Mix: More Vietnamese

The term "Southeast Asian" includes persons from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, three culturally distinct nationalities. Furthermore, the H'mong and I-Mien are Laotians because of where they reside, but are also themselves culturally distinct groups. Thus, given the differences among these groups, knowledge of the ethnic composition of the Southeast Asian refugee population becomes a necessary and useful tool for planning social policy.

Of all the Southeast Asian refugees resettled in America, the majority are from Vietnam. Indeed, in the years immediately following 1975, Vietnamese accounted for nearly 90 percent of the entire population. However, since 1980 their share of the total has decreased, as relatively more Cambodians and Laotians have been admitted. This trend is described in the Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) analysis of the ethnic composition of the entire refugee population.

> In January 1981 the annual Alien Registration of the Immigration and Naturalization Service showed that 72.3 percent of the Southeast Asians who registered were from Vietnam, 21.3 percent were from Laos, and 6.4 percent were from Cambodia. By the end of FY 1982, the Vietnamese made up about 67 percent of the total, while 20 percent were from Laos and about 13 percent were Cambodians.[1]

In Table 1.02 the ethnic mix of the more recent cohorts is presented. As this table illustrates, the proportion of new arrivals who are from Vietnam has leveled off at approximately 59 percent, while the percentage of Cambodians has increased and the percentage of Laotians has decreased.

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[1] Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), p. 19.

In sum, by either measure—the total population to enter since 1975 or annual admission figures—it is clear that the Vietnamese constitute a majority of the refugee population.

A Youthful, Predominantly Male Population

The age and sex distributions of the Southeast Asian refugees reveal a population that is relatively young and predominantly male. Table 1.03, which presents these distributions for the entire population as of January 1976 and January 1981, confirms this impression.

According to Table 1.03, by 1981 nearly 60 percent of all Southeast Asian refugees were under the age of 25, and the male-female ratio was approximately 1.2:1.

Later cohorts were even more youthful and more predominantly male. As Table 1.04 shows, over 63 percent of these later arrivals were 24 or younger, and of this group most were age 19 or younger. Perhaps a more striking way to suggest the youthfulness of this population is to underline the percentage of the FY 1982 arrivals age 45 or older: a mere 5.6 percent of the men and 8.5 percent of the women.

While the age distributions of men and women in these cohorts were roughly equivalent, their actual numbers were not. The January-September 1981 arrivals had a male-female ratio of 1.3:1 and the FY 1982 arrivals, 1.4:1. This discrepancy is particularly acute in the age 15 to 29 range, in which most marriages are likely to occur. The extreme case is among the FY 1982 arrivals age 18 to 21; in this range there are nearly two men for each woman.

Geographical Distribution in the United States

If one were to develop a portrait of the statistically "average refugee" based upon the data presented thus far, that hypothetical creation would be a young Vietnamese man who arrived in America in FY 1980. If that picture is further refined to reflect his state of destination, then that young man now lives in California.

Tables 1.05 and 1.06 present the state of destination for refugees who entered in the first nine months of 1981 and the estimated cumulative population by state through September 1983, including adjustments for secondary migration. By either measure, California has received a disproportionate share: 30 percent of the January-September 1981 refugees and 37 percent of the total eight-year influx. Texas is the second most frequent destination by both measures, having received over 9 percent of the 1981 admissions and over 8 percent of the total. The state of Washington ranked fourth among the 1981 arrivals and third for the cumulative population (30,400, or 4.6 percent).

Not surprisingly, the high concentration of refugees in California, Texas, and Washington is reflected in the number of refugees initially resettled in the states' respective Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas. As Table 1.07 indicates, Southern California (SMSAs numbers 1, 3, and 9) was by far the preferred destination. The San Francisco Bay area (numbers 2 and 8) was substantially more favored than the next-ranked Houston. Of course, these distribution figures also reflect to a certain extent the concentration of earlier arrivals, many of whom were receiving relatives among the 1981 cohort.

Among the three nationalities of the Southeast Asian population, the patterns of geographical dispersal vary, as is shown in Table 1.08. It is the Vietnamese who are fueling the California influx so disproportionately. Proportionately more Cambodians have settled in New York, Massachusetts, and Washington, while Laotians are overly represented among refugees settling in Washington, Illinois, Minnesota, and Oregon.

The differing distribution patterns among the nationalities is significant in terms of social planning, given the documented differences in culture, level of education, English facility, and the like among these three populations. One might reasonably assume that social planners need similar data on the distribution patterns of male and female refugees, but unfortunately none of these data are available by sex.

Selected Demographic, Socioeconomic Characteristics

Marital Status Unknown

We were unable to locate any data on the marital status of these refugees. Even small-scale local studies provided no such significant database. However, we expect that certain studies in progress will yield estimates within a year. Also, when the Office of Refugee Resettlement computerizes data on family and household composition from forms filed at the time of adjustment to immigrant status, a national estimate should be possible.

Relatively High Fertility Rates

Female Southeast Asian refugees are concentrated in the most fertile age groups; therefore, based on this population's age structure alone, without regard to cultural influences, one would predict relatively high fertility rates. Unfortunately, data collection efforts in this area have been limited. Thus, to develop a reliable impression of these women's fertility, we will first review a National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) report on all Asian and Pacific Islander births and then let its findings stand as the context for a discussion of the few data available on the Southeast Asian refugee population.

The NCHS study yields at least two facts relevant to the concerns at hand.[2] First, the number of births classified in the residual category "Other," which includes Southeast Asians, has risen sharply in recent years. From 1978 to 1980, the number rose from 24,597 to 39,224, which represents a substantial 59.5 percent increase. Second, the overwhelming majority of these "Other" births were to foreign-born mothers. In 1980, for example, among the "Other" women in the age category 20 to 24, over 80 percent of the births were to the foreign-born women; and among the "Other" women age 25 and older, nearly 90 percent of the births were to the foreign-born members.[3] In sum, the Southeast Asian refugees are members of a population that has had many births, and most of these births were to the foreign-born members.

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[2] The reader who is unfamiliar with the standard classification system needs to know that the term "Asian and Pacific Islander" refers to Chinese, Japanese, Hawaiian, Filipino, and "Other." The residual category "Other" includes Asian Indian, Cambodian, Korean, Laotian, Vietnamese, and others.

Still, these figures say little about the absolute level of fertility among the new wave refugees. At this point, then, it is necessary to turn to the few studies that do address the question of the fertility rate of this population.

First, Linda Gordon calculated a crude birth rate of about 28 per 1,000 by using a small sample of new wave women.[4] This figure is close to one derived by an Oregon study whose findings are presented in Table 1.09. The Oregon study analyzes all the live births to Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese women in Oregon during 1980. Table 1.09 shows that Southeast Asian women, compared to all women who gave birth in Oregon during that year, were one or two years older and had more pregnancies and more children. Further, Laotian women had more births than their Cambodian or Vietnamese counterparts.

Another avenue for assessing this group's fertility is to calculate child-woman ratios, which offer at least a general impression of fertility. Using women age 15 to 49 as the base, Linda Gordon calculated these ratios for cohorts entering each year from 1975 to 1981: 509 children per 1,000 women in 1975; 594 in 1976-1978 combined; 496 in 1979; 476 in 1980; and 493 in 1981. While these figures document a downward trend, they need to be seen in light of the child-woman ratio for the United States in 1980: 279.[5]

The cause of this downward trend is unclear. However, it is tempting (although perhaps not scientifically sound) to predict that this trend will continue. As "proof," one might consider Rita Simon's 1980 study of 50 Vietnamese mothers with adolescent daughters in families which had arrived in Chicago between 1975 and 1980. Simon found that

> The mothers already recognized that their daughters would have fewer children than they themselves had had; half of them thought their daughters would have three or fewer children, a third thought four children and 6 percent thought five children. Forty-four percent wanted their daughters to have three or fewer children versus 42 percent who desired them to have four and 10 percent who desired their daughters to have five children. The

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[3] Selma Taffel, "Characteristics of Asian Births: United States, 1980," Monthly Vital Statistics Report, 32, No. 10, Supplement (February 10, 1984), Tables 1 and 19.

[4] Linda W. Gordon, "New Data on the Fertility of Southeast Asian Refugees in the United States," presented at the Population Association of America, San Diego, California, April 29 - May 1, 1982, p. 4.

[5] Gordon, p. 11.

> daughters themselves wanted even fewer children than the mothers anticipated.[6]

In sum, although fertility data are scant, it is clear that the Southeast Asian refugees are concentrated in the most fertile age groups and have borne children at a rate above replacement level.

Large Households

Although regional studies of refugee households vary in their scope and depth, all point to one fact: the households are large. In Simon's study of the Vietnamese families resettled in Chicago between 1975 and 1980, the average family unit had six children and one or two other relatives.[7] A 1983 study in Long Beach, California, found the distribution of the household size shown in Table 1.10. The small cell sizes of the Laotian groups (the I-Mien and the H'mong) mean that the reliability of these distributions should not be overstressed, but the I-Mien households do seem the largest on the average and the Vietnamese, the smallest. Half of the I-Mien households had seven or more members, whereas over half of the Vietnamese households had six or fewer. The distribution of the Cambodian household sizes most closely resembles the pattern for all groups: about half of the households had between four and six members; another third had seven to twelve; and the remainder had three or fewer.

Finally, a 1981 Orange County, California, survey also looked at the size and composition of households, and its findings, which are presented in Table 1.11, were consistent with those given above. According to this study, 62 percent of the households had five or more persons, and of this number about half had seven or more persons. The mean number of refugees per household was 5.5. While the average number of children per household was calculated to be three, slightly over one fifth of the households had five or more children. One fourth of the households had four or more adults.

Low Level of Educational Attainment and High Level of Current Enrollments

The second wave of Southeast Asian refugees entered this country with less education than the first wave. In fact, as Table 1.12 documents, the average number of years of education among those entering in 1980, the peak year for new arrivals, was 6.8, which is considerably lower than the 1975 cohort's 9.5 years.

The 1981 study of refugees in Orange County confirmed the lower levels of education attained in Southeast Asia by the later arrivals. The findings are presented in Table 1.13. Among the refugees who had been in the United States for five or more years at the time of the study, approximately one quarter had had "more than high school," another quarter had had "less than high school," and the remainder had completed high school. In striking contrast were the figures for those who had been in America for one or two years: 13 percent had more than a high school education, 27 percent had completed high school, and the majority—59 percent—had less than a high school education. Unfortunately, the category "less than high school" is not subdivided, so estimates of persons who actually had no schooling or only a year or two are not available.

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[6] Rita J. Simon, "Russian and Vietnamese Immigrant Families: A Comparative Analysis of Parental and Adolescent's Adjustment to Their New Society" (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois, November 18, 1980), p. 39.

[7] Simon, p. 46.

This survey furnished other significant findings. First, the educational attainments of the ethnic groups show marked differences. Almost all of the H'mong, for example, had less than a high school education. (An educated guess would be that "less than high school" means, in this case, very little schooling and practically none for the women.) The Vietnamese reported significantly higher levels of attainment, and the Cambodians education placed them in the middle ground relative to other groups.

Other findings include the level of schooling in relation to the refugee's age and current job status. Younger adults had more education than adults age 45 and over. In addition, the employed refugees had more education than those who were students or who were unemployed at the time of the survey.

Finally, this study offers one set of figures highly relevant to the issue at hand: educational attainment by gender. As Table 1.13 indicates, women were half again as likely as men to have had less than a high school education in Southeast Asia; that is, 49 percent of the women, but only 34 percent of the men, had less than a high school education. Furthermore, women were half as likely as men to have had more than a high school education: 11 percent of the women compared to 23 percent of the men.

The same study analyzed selected characteristics of refugees who were enrolled in any type of class at the time of the survey. The percentages shown in Table 1.14 reveal a population that is taking advantage of its new country's educational and training system. Fifty-five percent of Orange County's adult refugee population was enrolled in school. Enrollment rates were highest for persons age 18 to 24 and lowest for persons 55 years old or older (76 percent and 32 percent, respectively). As for the breakdown by ethnic group, the Vietnamese were the least likely to be enrolled, presumably because they had been in the United States the longest and had already mastered English or attained their training goals; however, even this "low" group had over half of their members enrolled. Among the Cambodians and H'mong, approximately three fourths of both groups were enrolled.

One interesting finding of this study was that the more education the refugee received in his native country, the more likely he was to be enrolled in a class here.

Finally, although the figures for enrollment by gender are close, they still indicate that more men than women were profiting from the availability of classes: 60 percent of the men and 50 percent of the women were enrolled in classes. These percentages confirm anecdotal evidence that suggests that throughout the United States more male refugees attend classes.

What classes do refugees take? Among the Orange County population, English was far and away the most common field of study, followed distantly by such job-oriented fields as electronics and business. (See Table 1.15.)

A 1982 ORR-commissioned annual national sample of Southeast Asian refugees provides further proof of their high enrollment rates. Relating the percentage of refugees in English training to months in the United States, the study found that nearly 60 percent of refugees here six or fewer months were enrolled in English classes. On the other end of the scale, slightly more than 11 percent of those here longer than 36 months were similarly enrolled. Percentages for the other groups moved along a continuum so that, as one might well have predicted, the longer the refugee had been resettled here, the less likely he was to be enrolled in English classes. Another feature studied, the percentage of refugees in training or schooling other than English classes, suggests that once their English is serviceable, refugees are more likely to enroll in other training: over 30 percent of those here more than two years versus a quarter of those here less than that.[8] (See Table 1.16.)

English Language Facility: Weak, but Improving

Given the low level of educational attainment of the second wave of refugees, their limited fluency upon arrival in the United States should not be surprising. Table 1.17 shows that in the large 1980 cohort, only 6 percent could speak English well or fluently, in comparison to 25 percent of the cohorts for 1975 and 1976-1977. Although 17.4 percent of the 1982 arrivals could speak English this well, their improved skills may well reflect the expanded training offered in the refugee camps. At the other end of the scale, the percent speaking no English at the time of arrival, the findings are predictable: while 30.5 percent of the 1975 cohort could speak no English, 57.1 percent of the 1980 arrivals were similarly limited.

The pattern of adjustment in terms of mastery of English recalls, and is probably related to, the trends in enrollments discussed above. Simply put, the longer the refugee has been here, the better his language facility. The ORR-commissioned study reported on the percent speaking no English and the percent speaking English well. Although these figures are for the entire refugee population regardless of age, as opposed to earlier figures which show rates for persons 16 years old and older, they still yield reasonable estimates. Of those refugees here a year or less, approximately one fourth said they spoke no English. The percentages gradually decreased so that of the refugees who were here three years or longer, only 6.2 percent spoke no English. Furthermore, whereas under one fourth of persons here for two years or less spoke English well, among refugees here for three years or more, 65.9 percent reported speaking English well.[9]

In sum, the new wave refugee may have arrived in America with little education and less facility with the English language, but he is likely to have taken a English class and to have significantly improved his mastery of English over the course of three years. However, this picture is incomplete. First, the data are seldom disaggregated by sex, so there is no significant database to support the perceptions of many service providers that the women entered America with less education and were less likely to know any English. Second, the categories "speaking no English" and "speaking English well" create a scale which is not sufficiently precise for some purposes. For instances, it does not make clear how good "well" is--good enough to attend college? participate in technical/vocational training? wash dishes? shop? In other words, the figures present the big picture, but some critical details are missing.

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[8] Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program, p. 25.

[9] Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program, p. 25.

Just how central the levels of educational attainment and English language fluency are to the assessment of the refugees' assimilation is made clear below, in the discussion of these characteristics relative to the refugees' labor force participation status.

Labor Force and Economic Characteristics

The Key Labor Force Variable: English Language Proficiency

The labor force picture for these refugees can be summarized simply: voluntary agencies, refugees, and employers are agreed that English language proficiency is indispensable for any but a dead-end job. Recent entrants rationally prefer to study English rather than to embark on an often futile job search; and once their command of English is serviceable, the refugees participate industriously in the labor force.

Table 1.16 presents basic data by length of residence in the United States. While causality is not determinable from a cross-section table, it is clear that labor force participation, income, and percent speaking English moved together. On one end of the scale, for instance, were refugees who had been here for six months or less. Their labor force participation rate was 21.6 percent, their weekly income was $150.10, and the percent speaking English was 18.5. The corresponding figures on the other end of the scale—that is, for persons here three or more years—were 68.4 percent in the labor force, $236.32 earned a week, and 65.9 percent speaking English well. The labor force participation rate of over 68 percent should be appreciated in light of this rate for all adults sixteen and older in the United States in 1980: 64 percent.

This table also demonstrates how the percent of refugees who were unemployed and the percent who were receiving cash assistance dropped sharply as mastery of English improved. Three quarters of the most recent arrivals were unemployed, and 82.7 percent received cash assistance; the percent speaking English well was 18.5. Among refugees here three years or longer, 14.8 percent were unemployed and 22.7 percent received cash assistance. The percent speaking English well was 65.9.

When English language proficiency and labor force variables can be cross-tabulated, an even stronger case is made for mastery of English. For instance, in Table 1.18 the ability to speak and understand English is correlated with labor force participation, unemployment, and weekly wages. There is no doubt that as the refugees' English improves, they participate in the labor force in greater proportions and earn more, while their chances of being unemployed drop. Perhaps this table, more than any other, presents convincing evidence of the single most important variable in the "labor force equation"—language proficiency.

Finally, one other question in the Orange County study deserves attention. Probing the reasons for unemployment among refugees, the study discovered the results shown in Table 1.19. The most frequently cited reason is the least concrete of the responses—"left

Southeast Asia." Of course, because it is not concrete does not imply that it is invalid. Indeed, it seems a perfectly reasonable response to be offered by the most recently arrived refugees, which was the case. The other responses indicate clear barriers to employment. The Laotians and H'mong, with their low levels of education and English proficiency, cite the language barrier as the main problem, second only to "left Southeast Asia." In addition to having left Southeast Asia, the women cite with equal frequency the language barriers and their lack of previous work experience. Only half as many women as men cite continuing education as a reason for unemployment, a fact which correlates with the figures on enrollment by sex.

Women's Occupational Profile

The 1981 Orange County survey showed that the women's occupational pattern was surprisingly similar to the men's. (See Table 1.20.) Thirteen percent of the men and 10 percent of the women reported having jobs with professional/technical status. Incidentally, as Table 1.19 illustrates, length of residence in the United States, education in the home country, and English in the home country were strongly associated with professional status. This phenomenon is probably reflective of status carried over or regained from the home country and of the fact that the earliest refugees (the 1975 cohort) were exceptionally well educated.

Further analysis of the occupational profile reveals that a slightly greater proportion of the female population had white collar jobs, compared to the proportion of men reporting jobs in this category. In contrast, relatively more men had blue collar jobs. The greatest discrepancy, however, was between the proportion of women and men reporting their occupations as "electronics"; men, as one might predict, were represented more in this category. Finally, it appears that Southeast Asian refugees share at least one characteristic with their receiving society: while 12 percent of the women surveyed said they were housewives, no men so indicated.

A 1982 study of Southeast Asian refugees in Portland, Oregon, adds some information to help refine the portrait of the female refugee. (See Table 1.21.) The respondents were identified as either full-time students, employed full-time students, employed persons, persons looking for employment, persons not looking for employment, or persons not interested in employment. Women heads of households were proportionately more numerous in the "not interested" and the "not looking" categories. Members of these categories also had the least education, the fewest languages read, the fewest months of English classes in the United States, and the lowest self-rated English proficiency.

One of the important findings of this study is that the "not looking" group was actually highly motivated to work, but its members "cannot make the system operate for them." The researchers had developed a scale to measure such attitudes concerning the value of working, optimism about adjustment to the United States, satisfaction with the adequacy of welfare payments, and the perception that the American system is intelligible and can be made to work for the respondent. The "not looking" group also valued working more highly than any other category. The "looking for work" group ranked second. Objectively, members of these two groups are the least qualified for jobs in the American system, and one would infer a great frustration is felt by a highly motivated would-be worker who lacks the qualifications to compete in the job market.

Low Income for Large Households

The Orange County study discussed above provided income distribution data. There, 42 percent of the households reported annual incomes below $12,000; 24 percent said between $12,000 and $18,000; 13 percent said between $18,000 and $24,000; and 21 percent reported incomes of $24,000 or more. The significance of these income levels is clear when viewed within the context of three facts. First, these incomes are usually the sum of at least two working adults' salaries. Second, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that for 1981, the year of the survey, an income of $16,618 was necessary to support a family of four at a low standard of living in Orange County.[10] And, third, the average refugee household had 5.5 persons, and 30 percent of the households had seven or more persons. The net result: little money to support the subsistence of many people.

Education Preceding Employment: The Employer's Perspective

The importance of the education-English language-employment triangle is so great that it warrants a few final remarks.

Both the Portland study and the Long Beach study found support for the refugee's frequently expressed belief that education should precede employment. The sixteen employers interviewed in Portland

> were unanimous in reporting that English ability presented the biggest problem they had with refugee workers.... The lowest rating of any [working characteristic] presented here is that for "Ability to grasp the 'Big Picture.'"[11]

Employers reported that lack of English is the principal impediment to advancement because that deficiency isolates the non-English speaker.

> Although the survey covered jobs which reportedly do not require English, overall employer estimates of the need for English were double the rate of daily English use reported by refugee workers. Furthermore, most employers reported that the current job market allows them to be more selective in hiring. They say they will no longer hire a person who does not speak English well enough to communicate. The interviewer encountered some outright hostility from employers who expressed their dissatisfaction with placement services which had not followed up after placing a refugee with poor English skills. The conclusion seems to be that employers base

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[10] C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), p. 73.

[11] J.L. Pullen and Rosemary Ryan, "Labor Force Participation Among Newly Arrived Southeast Asian Refugees in the Portland Area: Students, Workers, and Those Who Stay at Home" (Portland, Oregon: Portland State University, April 1982), pp. 39-40.

> hiring and promotion decisions on their perception of the worker's ability to communicate in English.[12]

Employers in Long Beach, California, expressed similar concerns:

> Whereas companies consulted said that they had had good success with refugees as motivated workers, they often complained that their overall knowledge of English as well as their overall ability to communicate were not good enough to allow for promotions. Several companies with large numbers of non-native speakers indicated that they had concerns over meeting affirmative action quotas for supervisory positions and other higher level positions. Consequently, to push refugees and other non-native speakers too fast into marginal positions may have the tendency to ghettoize them into the lowest levels of the labor force and to keep them there for the long run....[13]

Finally, it was also noted that refugees were perfectly willing to accept entry-level jobs which tied into a promotion ladder, but that they were reluctant to accept "a marginal position [which meant] losing educational opportunities and, thereby, the chance for long term self-sufficiency."[14]

Utilization of Social Support Services

Characteristics of Recipient Households

Table 1.22 identifies some predictable characteristics of households which receive cash assistance.[15] Compared to non-recipient households, recipient households have more dependent children and fewer wage earners to support the children. In addition, they are less likely to have a fluent English speaker, and they are notably larger than non-recipient households.

The Portland study analyzed the patterns in refugees' utilization of cash assistance, classifying households as either receiving no cash assistance, receiving cash assistance to supplement wages, or receiving cash assistance and no wages. The results, which are presented in Table 1.23, create a portrait of the heads of households in each of the three categories. The researchers found that among households that were totally free of reliance on cash assistance, the heads were more likely to be men and that among households totally dependent on assistance, heads were more likely to be women.

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[12] Pullen and Ryan, pp. 40-41.

[13] Terrence G. Wiley, Heide Spruck-Wrigley, and Russell Burr, "Refugee Resettlement in Long Beach: Needs, Service Utilization Patterns, Demographics, and Curriculum Recommendations" (Long Beach, California: Department of Public Health, February 22, 1983), p. 40 (ERIC ED 228844).

[14] Wiley, Spruck-Wrigley, and Burr, p. 39.

[15] The regulations concerning welfare assistance for refugees are discussed in Appendix A.

This study further delineated the heads of households for the three groups described above based on the heads' levels of education and English. The no-cash assistance heads had more formal education and spoke English better and more often than heads of the other two groups. They had also been in the United States longer than the others. The households entirely dependent on cash assistance had heads who scored lowest on these variables.

The findings concerning the intermediate group are similarly enlightening. This group had the largest households, the highest monthly expenses, and the least per capita income. The inference is that refugees often have jobs that do not provide adequate incomes to support them. They work, but they do not earn enough to become independent of public assistance programs.

Types of Assistance Received

The level of utilization varies with the type of assistance. The Orange County study found the levels presented in Table 1.24. Medical aid was the most frequently received form of assistance, followed closely by welfare. Half of the refugees surveyed received food stamps. Rates for other forms of assistance were considerably lower.

Levels of Utilization

But none of this addresses what is perhaps the most controversial issue related to utilization of social support services, namely, overall level of utilization. Table 1.25, which presents findings from the Orange County survey, clearly illustrates that the higher the household's earned income, the less likely it is to receive assistance. Whereas welfare was received by 60 percent of households earning less than $500 a month, among households earning $2,000, this rate dropped to 14 percent. Similarly, over one third of households in the lowest income bracket received food stamps, but only 2 percent of the highest bracket received food stamps.

These rates of utilization must be evaluated in light of the mean household size (5.5 percent) and the high cost of living in Orange County. Within this context, the refugees' level of participation in assistance programs seems low.

Moreover, when aid was received, the amounts were rather small, given these factors. As Table 1.26 illustrates, among households receiving welfare, over half receive $600 or less each month, and 80 percent of all households using food stamps receive $200's worth or less per month. Thus, the typical household may receive payments of $800 per month. If, as the same study found, this household's rent is the average $350 per month, then that leaves $450 to support the entire household for one month--and that household is likely to have over five people.

Great Impact on Some States and Counties

Granted, the dollar amounts spent on assistance programs by federal, state, and local governments may be rather small when figured in terms of amount spent per refugee. However, this does not mean that some states and counties have not felt an impact because of the number of recipient households in their area. The problem, very simply expressed, is that because refugees are not evenly distributed thoughout America, neither is the cost of their support services distributed evenly.

A 1981 report by the National Association of Counties Research, Inc. looked at this situation and found that certain states and counties had experienced excessive increases in the number of refugees and the number of refugees on cash assistance. Ten states led by California, Washington, and Minnesota had the biggest numerical increases in the number of refugees on cash assistance between February 1, 1979, and November 1, 1980. These states accounted for more than 76.2 percent of the total increase in the number of refugees on cash assistance in the United States. Certain counties also experienced excessive increases. Particularly affected were counties in California and Minnesota. Tables 1.27, 1.28, and 1.29 present these findings in greater detail.

TABLE 1.01

Southeast Asian Refugee Admissions, by Entry Program: 1975 to September 30, 1982

Resettled under Special Parole Program (1975)	129,792
Resettled under Humanitarian Parole Program (1975)	602
Resettled under Special Lao Program (1976)	3,466
Resettled under Expanded Parole Program (1976)	11,000
Resettled under "Boat Cases" Program as of August 1, 1977	1,883
Resettled under Indochinese Parole Programs:	
August 1, 1977-September 30, 1977	680
October 1, 1977-September 30, 1978	20,397
October 1, 1978-September 30, 1979	80,678
October 1, 1979-September 30, 1980	166,727
Resettled under Refugee Act of 1980:	
October 1, 1980-September 30, 1981	132,454
October 1, 1981-September 30, 1982	72,155
TOTAL	619,834

Prior to the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980, most Southeast Asian refugees entered the United States as "parolees" (refugees) under a series of parole authorizations granted by the Attorney General under the Immigration and Nationality Act. These parole authorizations are usually identified by the terms used in this table.

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), Table I.

TABLE 1.02

Southeast Asian Refugee Admissions, by Nationality: January 1981 to FY 1983

Nationality	Jan.-Sept. 1981		FY 1982		FY 1983	
	No.	% Dist.	No.	% Dist.	No.	% Dist.
Cambodia	25,412	26.1	20,690	28.9	12,986	33.8
Laos	21,851	22.4	9,456	13.2	2,873	7.5
Vietnam	50,081	51.4	41,361	57.8	22,613	58.8
Other[a]	5,702					
TOTAL[b]	97,344	100.0	71,507	100.0	38,472	100.0

[a] Other Southeast Asians are primarily infants born in refugee camps. For FY 1982 and FY 1983 data are for country of citizenship rather than of birth, which circumvents the problem.

[b] Percentages may not total 100.0 due to rounding.

Source: Compiled and calculated from "Monthly Data Report" for September - October 1981, September 1982, and September 1983, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

TABLE 1.03

Southeast Asian Refugee Population, by Age and Sex: January 1976 and January 1981[a]

	January 1976			January 1981		
Age	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-5	14.2%	14.8%	14.5%	8.2%	9.3%	8.7%
6-11	14.6	14.7	14.7	15.8	17.2	16.4
12-17	13.5	13.3	13.4	16.6	15.2	16.0
18-24	19.6	16.9	18.3	19.7	17.4	18.7
25-34	18.3	18.2	18.2	20.6	19.8	20.3
35-44	9.5	9.1	9.3	10.3	10.4	10.3
45-62	7.0	7.4	7.2	7.5	8.0	7.7
63+	3.2	5.6	4.4	1.3	2.7	1.9
TOTAL[b]	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Number	57,919	56,221	114,140	122,579	100,829	223,408

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[a] Data from Immigration and Naturalization Service alien registrations, as tabulated by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, were not adjusted for underregistration or for missing data. This accounts for differences from the totals on other tables.

[b] Figures may not add to totals due to rounding.

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), Table 8.

TABLE 1.04

Southeast Asian Refugee Admissions, by Age and Sex: January-September 1981 and FY 1982

	January-September 1981					FY 1982			
	Males		Females			Males		Females	
Age	No.	% Dist.	No.	% Dist.	Age	No.	% Dist.	No.	% Dist.
1-4	6,340	10.9	5,987	13.4	0-5	5,332	12.6	4,831	16.0
5-9	6,586	11.3	5,584	12.5	6-11	5,488	13.0	4,138	13.7
10-14	7,156	12.2	5,156	11.6	12-17	7,280	17.2	4,297	14.3
15-19	9,717	16.6	5,803	13.0	18-19	3,166	7.5	1,684	5.6
20-24	9,618	16.5	6,339	14.2	20-21	3,324	7.9	1,771	5.9
25-29	6,917	11.8	5,266	11.8	22-24	4,090	9.7	2,495	8.3
30-34	4,005	6.9	3,161	7.1	25-34	8,076	19.1	6,048	20.1
35-39	2,639	4.5	1,999	4.5	35-44	3,092	7.3	2,268	7.5
40-44	1,813	3.1	1,410	3.2					
45-49	1,201	2.0	1,058	2.4	45-54	1,410	3.3	1,243	4.1
50-54	876	1.5	903	2.0					
55-59	549	0.9	586	1.3	55-64	652	1.5	783	2.6
60-64	444	0.8	559	1.2					
65+	510	0.9	818	1.8	65+	363	0.8	559	1.8
TOTAL	58,371	100.0	44,629	100.0		42,273	100.0	30,117	100.0

Source: Compiled and calculated from "Monthly Data Report" for September-October 1981 and September 1982, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

TABLE 1.05

Southeast Asian Refugee Admissions, by State of Destination: January to September 1981

State of Destination	Number	State of Destination	Number
Alabama	648	Nevada	286
Alaska	42	New Hampshire	67
Arizona	926	New Jersey	806
Arkansas	470	New Mexico	899
California	31,167	New York	4,792
Colorado	1,295	North Carolina	743
Connecticut	1,012	North Dakota	203
Delaware	35	Ohio	1,655
District of Columbia	1,745	Oklahoma	1,356
Florida	2,056	Oregon	3,123
Georgia	2,440	Pennsylvania	3,887
Hawaii	1,139	Rhode Island	936
Idaho	328	South Carolina	566
Illinois	4,296	South Dakota	102
Indiana	505	Tennessee	875
Iowa	1,170	Texas	9,567
Kansas	1,301	Utah	1,454
Kentucky	393	Vermont	40
Louisiana	1,834	Virginia	2,435
Maine	353	Washington	4,645
Maryland	778	West Virginia	77
Massachusetts	3,352	Wisconsin	779
Michigan	1,171	Wyoming	45
Minnesota	2,903	Guam	1
Mississippi	189	Puerto Rico	0
Missouri	1,688	Virgin Islands	0
Montana	68	Other	6
Nebraska	375	Unknown	22
		TOTAL	103,046

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, "Monthly Data Report" for September-October 1981, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, p. 12.

TABLE 1.06

Southeast Asian Refugee Total Population, by State of Residence: 1975 to September 30, 1983[a]

State of Residence	Estimated Total
Alabama	2,300
Alaska	200
Arizona	4,600
Arkansas	2,900
California	244,100
Colorado	10,100
Connecticut	6,000
Delaware	300
District of Columbia	1,100
Florida	11,700
Georgia	7,800
Hawaii	6,800
Idaho	1,300
Illinois	23,500
Indiana	4,200
Iowa	8,100
Kansas	8,700
Kentucky	2,300
Louisiana	13,000
Maine	1,300
Maryland	7,300
Massachusetts	15,400
Michigan	10,000
Minnesota	21,000
Mississippi	1,500
Missouri	6,200
Montana	1,000
Nebraska	2,300
Nevada	1,900
New Hampshire	600
New Jersey	5,900
New Mexico	2,400
New York	22,700
North Carolina	4,800
North Dakota	800
Ohio	9,800
Oklahoma	8,500
Oregon	16,200
Pennsylvania	23,000
Rhode Island	6,200
South Carolina	2,400
South Dakota	1,000
Tennessee	4,100
Texas	53,600
Utah	7,900
Vermont	500
Virginia	20,300
Washington	30,400
West Virginia	500
Wisconsin	9,600
Wyoming	300
Guam	200
Other Territories	b
TOTAL	658,900

[a] Adjusted for secondary migration through September 30, 1983, rounded to the nearest hundred.

[b] Fewer than 100.

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, "Monthly Data Report" for September 1983, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, p. 2.

TABLE 1.07

Southeast Asian Refugee Admissions, by Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area: 1981

Rank	Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area	Number of Arrivals[a]
1	Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	9,323
2	San Francisco-Oakland, CA	5,609
3	Anaheim-Garden Grove, CA	4,996
4	Houston, TX	4,949
5	Washington, DC-MD-VA	4,125
6	Chicago, IL	3,828
7	New York, NY-NJ	3,719
8	San Jose, CA	3,678
9	San Diego, CA	3,672
10	Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	3,586
11	Boston, MA[b]	3,569
12	Seattle-Everett, WA	3,537
13	Philadelphia, PA-NJ	3,102
14	Portland, OR-WA	2,908
15	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI	2,111
16	Atlanta, GA	2,008
17	Sacramento, CA	1,908
18	Salt Lake City-Ogden, UT	1,474
19	New Orleans, LA	1,324
20	Denver-Boulder, CO	1,191

[a] Preliminary figures; geographic coding was incomplete on about 5 percent of all entries at the time this table was produced.

[b] The boundaries of this Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area were over-defined for the purposes of this table.

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, "Monthly Data Report" for September 1983, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 4.

TABLE 1.08

Southeast Asian Refugee Admissions, by Nationality and State of Destination: 1982

State	Cambodia	Laos	Vietnam	Total
	Nationality			
California	2,264	1,563	11,300	15,127
Texas	1,197	523	4,392	6,112
New York	827	187	1,870	2,884
Massachusetts	810	203	1,083	2,096
Washington	601	569	1,370	2,540
Illinois	563	390	1,105	2,058
Minnesota	491	361	799	1,651
Oregon	302	322	818	1,442
TOTAL, ALL 50 STATES	12,957	6,900	37,030	56,887

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, "Southeast Asian Refugee Arrivals by State of Initial Resettlement and Country of Birth: Calendar Year 1982," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, photocopy.

TABLE 1.09

Selected Characteristics of Southeast Asian Refugee Women Who Gave Birth in Oregon in 1980, by Nationality

Selected Characteristic	Nationality: Lao	Nationality: Vietnamese	Nationality: Cambodian	All 1980 Oregon births
Median age of mothers	26	27	26	25
Median number of pregnancies per mother	2.59	1.82	1.75	1.50
Median number of living children per mother	2.17	1.76	1.27	1.17
Total living children as percentage of total pregnancies	90.3%	94.8%	75.2%	Not reported
Number of mothers	183	111	42	Not reported

Source: Reproduced in Linda W. Gordon, "New Data on the Fertility of Southeast Asian Refugees in the United States," presented at the Population Association of America, San Diego, California, April 29-May 1, 1982, Table 1.

TABLE 1.10

Southeast Asian Refugee Households in Long Beach, California, by Size and Ethnic Group

Ethnic Group	Number of Individuals in a Household				Number
	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	
I-Mien	15%	35%	40%	10%	20
H'mong	20%	48%	31%	1%	29
Cambodian	12%	53%	24%	11%	183
Vietnamese	40%	38%	16%	6%	50
Vietnamese/Chinese	24%	43%	19%	14%	21
ALL GROUPS	18%	48%	24%	10%	303

Source: Terrence G. Wiley, Heide Spruck-Wrigley, and Russell Burr, "Refugee Resettlement in Long Beach: Needs, Service Utilization Patterns, Demographics, and Curriculum Recommendations" (Long Beach, California: Department of Public Health, February 22, 1983), p. 20 (ERIC ED 228844).

TABLE 1.11

Southeast Asian Refugee Households in Orange County, California, by Size and Composition

Total Number of Persons in Household	Percent
1 - 2	9
3 - 4	29
5 - 6	32
7 or more	30
TOTAL	100

Total Number of Adults in Household	Percent
1	8
2	49
3	16
4	14
5 or more	13
TOTAL	100

Total Number of Children in Household	Percent
1	18
2	23
3	22
4	16
5	10
6 or more	11
TOTAL	100

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Chart 42.

TABLE 1.12

Educational Attainment of Southeast Asian Refugees, by Year of Entry: 1975 to 1982

Year of Entry	Average Years of Education
1982	6.8
1981	7.0
1980	6.8
1979	7.6
1978	8.2
1976-7	7.1
1975	9.5

Note: These figures refer to characteristics of incoming refugees at time of arrival in the United States and should not be confused with the current characteristics of these refugees.

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), p. 25.

TABLE 1.13

Educational Attainment of Southeast Asian Refugees in Orange County, California, by Selected Characteristics

Selected Characteristic	Less Than High School (%)	High School (%)	More Than High School (%)
Aggregate	41	41	17
Ethnic Group			
Vietnamese	25	54	21
Laotian	80	12	8
H'mong	93	1	6
Cambodian	68	24	8
How Long in U.S.			
Less than 1 year	46	38	16
1-2 years	59	27	13
2-3 years	55	43	4
3-5 years	41	39	20
5 years or more	22	54	24
Sex			
Male	34	43	23
Female	49	40	11
Age			
18-24	31	60	9
25-34	36	39	25
35-44	45	38	17
45-54	51	32	17
55 and older	56	40	4
Current Job Status			
Employed	20	52	28
Student	56	30	14
Unemployed	54	37	9

Note: These figures refer to characteristics of incoming refugees at time of arrival in the United States and should not be confused with the current characteristics of these refugees.

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Chart 26.

TABLE 1.14

Enrollment of Southeast Asian Refugee Population in Orange County, California, by Selected Characteristics

Selected Characteristic	Percent Enrolled
Age	
18-24	76
25-34	53
35-44	58
45-54	43
55 and older	32
Ethnic group	
Vietnamese	51
Laotian	57
Lao/H'mong	73
Cambodian	74
Education in Country of Origin	
Less than high school	55
High school	52
More than high school	62
Sex	
Male	60
Female	50

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Charts 27-30.

TABLE 1.15

Enrollment of Southeast Asian Refugee Population in Orange County, California, by Field of Study

Field	Percent Who Have Studied in Each Field
English	60
Electronics	10
Humanities/Business	12
Vocational/Technical	10
Computer Science	4
Science/Mathematics	3
No training	22

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Chart 31.

TABLE 1.16

Patterns in Southeast Asian Refugee Adjustment, by Length of Residence in the United States

	Months in the United States						
Characteristic	0-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	Over 36
Labor force participation	21.6%	33.3%	36.6%	54.6%	48.9%	59.0%	68.4%
Unemployment	75.0%	49.7%	40.8%	41.0%	29.3%	26.4%	14.8%
Weekly income of employed persons	$150.10	$156.43	$153.92	$180.66	$157.74	$184.71	$236.32
Percent in English training	58.5%	47.4%	54.5%	39.7%	30.0%	25.6%	11.5%
Percent in other training or schooling	23.4%	27.4%	26.4%	27.1%	35.9%	30.1%	31.6%
Percent speaking no English*	26.9%	25.3%	18.6%	15.1%	13.5%	9.2%	6.2%
Percent speaking English well*	18.5%	15.1%	23.1%	24.5%	35.0%	41.4%	65.9%
Percent receiving cash assistance*	82.7%	81.7%	75.6%	67.3%	54.0%	46.3%	22.7%

Note: All except the asterisked figures refer to the population age 16 and over. The asterisked figures refer to the entire population regardless of age. Specifically, the cash assistance figure is the percentage of the entire sampled population residing in households receiving such assistance.

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, *Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), p. 25.

TABLE 1.17

English Language Proficiency of Southeast Asian Refugees, by Year of Entry: 1975 to 1982

Year of Entry	Percent Speaking No English	Percent Speaking English Well or Fluently
1982	42.3	17.4
1981	52.3	8.4
1980	57.1	6.0
1979	41.9	19.0
1978	53.7	9.0
1976-7	31.8	26.8
1975	30.6	25.2

Note: These figures refer to characteristics of incoming refugees at time of arrival in the United States and should not be confused with the current characteristics of these refugees.

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), p. 25.

TABLE 1.18

Labor Force Variables of Southeast Asian Refugee Population, by English Language Proficiency

Ability to Speak and Understand English	Labor Force Participation	Unemployment	Average Weekly Wages
Not at all	23.0%	45.1%	$159.19
A Little	52.2%	29.9%	$186.61
Well	65.2%	21.8%	$224.39
Fluently	75.1%	8.6%	$226.69

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), p. 24.

TABLE 1.19

Percent Distribution of Reasons for Southeast Asian Refugee Unemployment in Orange County, California, by Selected Characteristics[a]

Selected Characteristic	Left Southeast Asia	Language Barrier	Continue Education	Laid Off	Health/ Baby	Retired Othe	Never Been Employed	No Opinion
Aggregate	27	13	14	4	6	9	11	16
Ethnic group								
Vietnamese	13	5	20	5	7	13	14	23
Laotian	45	31	-	8	5	-	8	3
H'mong	56	27	3	-	2	2	8	2
Cambodian	59	13	23	-	-	2	-	3
How long in U.S.								
Less than 1 year	32	13	17	-	3	3	5	27
1-2 years	39	15	11	3	2	6	11	13
2-3 years	29	14	11	3	4	11	14	14
3-5 years	15	22	15	4	11	7	11	15
5 years or longer	7	4	20	10	14	19	14	12
Sex								
Male	30	9	19	5	5	10	5	17
Female	25	16	10	4	6	8	16	15
Age								
18-24	8	4	42	5	2	3	14	22
25-34	31	17	11	4	7	4	11	15
35-44	42	14	9	5	4	3	11	12
45-54	29	8	10	3	5	13	8	24
55 and older	15	16	-	3	11	36	11	8

[a] Answers given in response to question, "What is the reason you are currently unemployed?"

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Chart 13.

TABLE 1.20

Percent Distribution of Occupational Profile of Southeast Asian Refugee Population in Orange County, California, by Selected Characteristics

Selected Characteristic	Professional/ Technical	White Collar	Blue Collar	Electronics	Student	Housewife	Unemployed/ Retired
Aggregate	12	6	14	5	16	6	41
How long in U.S.							
Less than 1 year	6	2	5	-	30	10	48
1-2 years	4	4	7	1	23	7	54
2-3 years	3	9	23	4	17	9	35
3-5 years	9	4	19	9	11	2	46
5 years or longer	23	9	20	9	6	4	29
Sex							
Male	13	5	17	7	19	-	39
Female	10	7	11	3	12	12	45
Education in home country							
Less than high school	4	4	8	1	21	12	50
High school	11	7	21	6	11	3	41
More than high school	30	9	10	13	13	1	24
English in own country							
Yes	24	9	17	10	12	1	27
No	3	5	12	2	18	9	51

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Chart 12.

TABLE 1.21

Average Values of Sample Characteristics of Southeast Asian Refugee Population in Portland, Oregon, by Labor Force Status

Characteristic of Respondent	Total	Full-time Student	Not Interested	Not Looking	Looking	Employed Full-time Student	Employed	Statistical Significance P	P
	N = 273	N = 65	N = 31	N = 41	N = 36	N = 12	N = 88	.05	.001
Age of head of household	33.70	26.94	44.90	37.02	33.22	27.00	34.32		Yes
Percent of women househeads	17	17	42	24	6	8	11		Yes
Months in camp	20.55	13.38	18.32	24.73	28.78	9.25	22.84		Yes
Formal education	5.81	9.54	4.71	3.49	5.86	12.25	6.73		Yes
Number of languages read[a]	1.57	1.71	1.16	.89	1.56	1.92	1.91		Yes
Months in the U.S.	21.52	18.37	16.03	18.66	22.53	23.92	26.36		Yes
Months of ESL in U.S.	10.58	10.43	8.90	9.75	12.50	14.08	10.14	No	
English rating[b]	3.37	3.85	2.32	2.61	3.11	5.17	3.60		Yes
Number of times English used daily[c]	4	4	2	2	4	8	3		Yes
Index of communication[d]	.63	.65	.28	.33	.41	1.28	.87		Yes

[a] In response to the question, "How many languages do you read well enough to be able to read a newspaper in that language?"

[b] Self-reported estimate of English language speaking ability on a scale where 1 = not at all and 8 = like an American except for the accent

[c] Excluding English classes

[d] Frequency of use adjusted by English rating to provide a single index of English communication

Source: J.L. Pullen and Rosemary Ryan, "Labor Force Participation Among Newly Arrived Southeast Asian Refugees in the Portland Area: Students, Workers, and Those Who Stay at Home" (Portland, Oregon: Portland State University, April 1982), Table IV.

TABLE 1.22

Comparison of Southeast Asian Refugee Households as Recipients or Non-Recipients of Cash Assistance

Household Characteristic	Recipients	Non-recipients
Average household size	5.1	3.8
Average number of wage-earners per household	0.5	1.6
Percent of household members:		
Under the age of 6	14.5%	9.0%
Under the age of 16	38.1%	24.5%
Percent of households with at least one fluent English speaker	2.4%	15.0%

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), p. 26.

TABLE 1.23
Average Values of Sample Characteristics of Southeast Asian Refugee Population in Portland, Oregon, by Welfare Dependency

Characteristic of Respondent	Total	Welfare Dependency No Cash	 Wages/ Cash	 Only Cash	Statistical Significance P	 P
	N = 273	N = 70	N = 63	N = 140	.05	.001
Age of head of household	33.70	33.86	33.32	33.80	No	
Percent of women househeads	17	7	13	24	Yes	
Months in camp	20.55	18.17	22.11	21.03	No	
Formal education	6.81	8.87	6.68	5.83		Yes
Number of languages read[a]	1.57	2.13	1.62	1.29		Yes
Months in the U.S.	21.52	27.23	23.16	17.92		Yes
Months of ESL in U.S.	10.58	10.71	11.58	10.01	No	
English rating[b]	3.37	3.99	3.60	2.96		Yes
Number of times English used daily[c]	4	8	6	3		Yes
Index of communication[d]	.63	.99	.70	.41		Yes
Characteristic of Household						
Number in dwelling unit	5.75	4.62	6.54	5.96		Yes
Monthly rent	285	259	307	288	Yes	
Number in family	4.25	3.51	5.63	4.00		Yes
Number of adults	2.06	1.90	2.94	1.74		Yes
Number of children	2.20	1.61	2.70	2.26	Yes	
Percent of adults working	26	64	39	0		Yes
Percent of adults in school	64	39	59	79		Yes
Family income/month	787	843	1010	659		Yes
Per capita income/month	233	302	204	211		Yes
Expenses: rent share/month	206	195	236	197	No	
utilities/month	60	63	76	52	Yes	
transportation: car	57	83	103	22		Yes
: bus	23	12	26	27		Yes
Remaining income: family	441	490	570	360		Yes
per capita[e]	165	204	141	156	Yes	

[a] In response to the question, "How many languages do you read well enough to be able to read a newspaper in that language?"

[b] Self-reported estimate of English language speaking ability on a scale where 1 = not at all and 8 = like an American except for the accent

[c] Excluding English classes

[d] Frequency of use adjusted by English rating to provide a single index of English communication

[e] Weighted according to the following formula;

$$\frac{\text{Remaining family income}}{(\text{No. of children ages 0-5} \times .3) + (\text{No. of children 6-18} \times .5) + (\text{No. of Adults})}$$

Source: J.L. Pullen and Rosemary Ryan, "Labor Force Participation Among Newly Arrived Southeast Asian Refugees in the Portland Area: Students, Workers, and Those Who Stay at Home" (Portland, Oregon: Portland State

TABLE 1.24

Southeast Asian Refugee Population in Orange County, California,
Reliance on Government Aid, by Type of Aid

Type of Aid	Percent Responding		
	Yes	No	Refused to Answer
Welfare	64	33	3
Food Stamps	50	46	4
Basic Grant Check	11	81	8
Supplemental Security Insurance	9	84	7
Medical Aid	69	29	2

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Charts 46-50.

TABLE 1.25

Southeast Asian Refugee Households in Orange County,
California, Receiving Government Aid, by Earned Monthly Income

Earned Monthly Income	Percent that Receive Food Stamps, per Income Bracket	Percent that Receive Welfare, per Income Bracket
Less than $500	35	60
$ 500 - $1,000	32	62
$1,000 - $1,250	20	31
$1,250 - $1,500	20	27
$1,500 - $2,000	8	14
$2,000 - or more	2	17

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Chart 44.

TABLE 1.26

Percent Distribution of Southeast Asian Refugee Households in Orange County, California, Receiving Government Aid, by Amount Received and Type

Dollar Amount Received	Percent of Households Receiving That Amount			
	Welfare Checks	Food Stamps	Basic Grant Checks	Supplemental Security Insurance
Less than 200	7	80	54	5
200 - 400	20	8	12	32
400 - 600	26	-	2	38
600 - 800	31	1	5	5
800 - 1,000	11	-	5	5
1,000 - or over	1	-	2	-
Refused to answer	4	11	20	15

Source: C. Beth Baldwin, "Capturing the Change: The Impact of Indochinese Refugees in Orange County" (Santa Ana, California: Immigrant and Refugee Planning Center, 1981), Charts 51-54.

TABLE 1.27

States by Numerical Increase in Number of Southeast Asian Refugees on Cash Assistance

State	Increase of Refugees on Cash Assistance	Increase in Refugee Population
1. California	54,480	83,067
2. Washington	10,716	12,231
3. Minnesota	10,662	10,238
4. Oregon	6,829	7,852
5. Texas	6,374	18,866
6. Pennsylvania	5,979	9,860
7. Illinois	4,681	10,604
8. Virginia	3,086	5,145
9. Massachusetts	2,576	5,071
10. Colorado	2,562	3,673
TOTAL	107,945	166,427

Source: Mark Tajima, Joseph Langlois, and Ronald F. Gibbs, "An Analysis of National, State, and County Refugee Cash Assistance Data" (Washington: National Association of Counties Research, Inc., August 1981), p. 5.

TABLE 1.28

Counties by Percent Increase of Number of Southeast Asian Refugees on Cash Assistance

County	Percent of Increase in Refugees on Cash Assistance
1. San Joaquin, California	3,805
2. San Francisco, California	2,272
3. Hennepin, Minnesota	1,627
4. Santa Clara, California	1,271
5. Ramsey, Minnesota	1,228
6. St. Joseph, Indiana	733
7. Jefferson, Colorado	723
8. Arapahoe, Colorado	697
9. Sacramento, California	620
10. Onodaga, New York	522

Source: Mark Tajima, Joseph Langlois, and Ronald F. Gibbs, "An Analysis of National, State, and County Refugee Cash Assistance Data" (Washington: National Association of Counties Research, Inc., August 1981), p. 7.

TABLE 1.29

Counties by Numerical Increase in Number of Southeast Asian Refugees on Cash Assistance

County	Number of Refugees on Cash Assistance April 1978	March 1981	Increase
1. Los Angeles, California	7,888	30,112	22,224
2. Orange, California	4,774	21,070	16,296
3. Santa Clara, California	953	13,064	12,111
4. San Diego, California	2,281	12,718	10,437
5. San Francisco, California	440	10,438	9,998
6. Ramsey, Minnesota	517	6,868	6,351
7. San Joaquin, California	121	4,725	4,604
8. Hennepin, Minnesota	280	4,838	4,558
9. Sacramento, California	720	5,182	4,462
10. Alameda, California	1,182	5,056	3,874
11. Denver, Colorado	745	3,300	2,555
12. New York, New York	400	2,359	1,959

Source: Mark Tajima, Joseph Langlois, and Ronald F. Gibbs, "An Analysis of National, State, and County Refugee Cash Assistance Data" (Washington: National Association of Counties Research, Inc., August 1981), p. 7.

Southeast Asian Women in Transition: A New Life in a Strange Land

Long Beach City College
September 18, 1984

Southeast Asian refugee women and the people who directly or indirectly aid them in their resettlement process came together to have a dialogue about the women's social and economic adjustment in their new country. Participants included representatives from mutual assistance associations, voluntary agencies, county departments of social services, and orientation and training programs, as well as educators, counselors, job developers, and social workers. The early part of the dialogue focused on the refugee women's circumstances and needs; this discussion provided the basis for the afternoon session during which participants made recommendations concerning policies and programs.

Gathering this information required a unique program. First, a paper which identified key issues was given. Then three vignettes depicting some common situations and problems of refugee women were presented. These vignettes, in addition to the paper, provided the springboard for discussions in small groups. There were four groups, and each included service providers and refugees. To facilitate the discussion, refugees were placed in groups according to their ethnic background so that only one translator was needed in each group. In the morning session, the groups considered the refugee women's needs and concerns, and in the afternoon they focused on related recommendations. Also, after the small group sessions, the large group was reconvened to hear summaries of each group's dialogue.

Southeast Asian Women in Transition: A New Life in a Strange Land was a highly substantive and productive dialogue. The paper and vignettes which initiated the dialogue are presented below; they are followed by a summary of the dialogue proceedings.

Southeast Asian Women: In Transition

by

Dr. Judy Chu

The year 1975 may have marked the end of the war in Southeast Asia, but it was only the beginning of major changes in the lives of the 614,000 refugees who were eventually to come to America (Refugee Reports, 1982). The trauma and turmoil of uprooting into a strange new land have forced changes in the economic and cultural structure of the Southeast Asian family, changes that are particularly complex in the case of the Southeast Asian woman. She has had to juggle a new life of great responsibilities with the traditions of her culture. She has had to be a leader for her family while undergoing tremendous stress herself. Life in America has promised an elevated status, but it has also increased frustrations.

While some have been able to cope with such changes well, others have not. And unfortunately, there is little tradition amongst Southeast Asians for reaching outside of the family for help in economic problems; reaching out for personal problems is even more rare. Social service providers, therefore, face a great challenge in helping Southeast Asian women. They must be especially adept at anticipating the problems facing the woman, who may not recognize them herself.

This paper begins the process of defining the problems of resettlement for the Southeast Asian woman refugee. While many of the examples and studies focus on the Vietnamese, who are 78 percent of the refugee population, the general thrust of the issues can be applied to Cambodians and the Lao/H'mong, who are 6 percent and 15 percent of the population, respectively.

History and Culture

It is well known that the culture of the Southeast Asian stems from Confucian ethics (Thuy, 1976). Such ethics emphasize the dominant role of the man of the family and the subordinate role of the female. The role of the female in such a family is to serve men all her life: her father in childhood, her husband in marriage, and her son in her later years. The woman has no economic or legal rights. She cannot divorce nor remarry. She is to hold Confucian ideals such as công (versatile ability in the home), dung (subtle beauty), ngôn (soft speech) and hanh (gentle behavior).

The institutionalization of women's deferential roles is reflected in the Vietnamese concept of phuc duc (Slote, 1977). Phuc duc refers to the accumulation of family strength through generations and the accomplishments of the past. However, its achievement is primarily the responsibility of the woman. She must be self-effacing, trustworthy, hard-working, and moral. If she is not, then her family can be destroyed for generations

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to come. Such a concept leaves Vietnamese men relatively free to act without consequence, whereas women have not only the present, but the future destiny of loved ones in their hands.

Cultural dictates, however, can vary substantially from actual practice. Southeast Asian women are now entering the work force in large numbers, thus taking their place of importance in the community. A survey of attitudes done of 350 households reflects this (Starr, Roberts, Lenoir, and Nguyen, 1979). To the statement, "A women's place is in the home," two-thirds of the respondents disagreed; in response to "A wife's job is as important as a husband's," four fifths agreed. Of note is the fact that 76 percent of the respondents were male. There would appear to be readiness of the Southeast Asian woman to enter the work force as well as some understanding of it in the community. Perhaps the tolerance of the woman's elevated role is due to the pressing need for economic survival; it may also be due to some unique particularities in the history of the Southeast Asian region.

In the case of Vietnam, Confucianism is not indigenous. Such values can be attributed to the 1,000 years of Chinese influence when China took over and incorporated Vietnam about the beginning of the Christian era, thereby institutionalizing the inferior status of the woman (Hoskins, 1975).

This period ended when the Vietnamese gained independence in 939 A.D. The long period of the struggle for independence, however, seemed to have lessened the effects of Confucianism. Some of the more opressive aspects of Confucianism never did appear in Vietnamese society, such as footbinding. Parents have been known to leave inheritances to daughters, and women keep their maiden name, even though they may also be known by their husband's last name. The Vietnamese woman manages the household budget, allocating spending money for the male.

The history of the struggle for independence includes many prominent women. The most famous of these women in both the North and the South are the Trung sisters. During the period of Chinese domination, in 34 A.D., a Vietnamese land-owning and literary man was executed by a tyrannical Chinese governor. The widow of the man and her sister, Trung Trac and Trung Nhi, were moved to avenge his death. They organized an army and led it by riding elephants. Through great military skill, they defeated the Chinese and, for a short time, ruled the country.

Folk tales also talk about the everyday women who pursue gainful occupations in order to support the family while their husbands are away or fighting in some war. While women did not ever dream of pursuing positions of leadership independently, this rich history showed that under duress, women could and would exert leadership.

French colonial rule in Vietnam undermined the independence of the Vietnamese, but did facilitate further the independence of women. Contrary to the established system, French schools were open to women as were some positions of influence, such as teaching, owning a business, and practicing a profession. When the French left Vietnam, they left a vacuum in high governmental positions, some of which were given to women. While male dominance was still the norm, men tolerated working side by side with a woman.

In summary, cultural norms dictate a second-class role for the Southeast Asian woman, but due to the trauma and turmoil of Southeast Asian history, the Southeast Asian woman had already come to the United States with a comparatively strong image and the experience of stepping beyond the parameters of her role in order to ensure that her family survives.

The Trauma of Flight

The great emphasis and importance placed on the family is reflected in the population breakdown of Southeast Asian refugees. Kunz (1973) depicted the typical refugee population in the world as being predominantly male, yet the Southeast Asian refugee population is evenly split, that is, 49.3 percent female. Despite the dangers involved in fleeing Southeast Asia, Southeast Asian females were seen as being strong enough and integral enough to the family to make the journey.

Generally, women are particularly vulnerable as refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1980). They are subject to sexual abuse, and they experience poor nutrition and thus difficulties in caring for children in camp conditions. Such is the case with Southeast Asian women, many of whom were subject to traumatic and sometimes violent incidents. Some left family behind as did young women whose families pressured them to leave for a better future in America. Generally, both male and female refugees who leave family behind feel "survivor guilt" and consequently have more difficulty in adjustment (Chu, 1981). It may be, however, that females are especially affected by such separations, for they must suddenly separate from a family to which they have been trained to be eternally filial. As one woman said, "I regret most not being home [Vietnam] when things were not going well. I feel as though I should have been there....I gave up my freedom of being with my family....Now I don't have much and most of my family is back home" (Do, 1983). Note that this woman refers to being with her family as "freedom."

For these women and others, the trauma of their flight may have left indelible memories which they hestitate to talk about due to shame, guilt, and stoicism. Yet many encountered great violence. Refugees from Cambodia had to cope with starvation, disease, mass execution, and cannibalism. And cases of female "boat people" being sexually abused are numerous. In 1982, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported that 53 percent of the boats were subject to rape/abduction attacks (Cerquone, 1984).

Such is the case of seventeen-year-old Xuan, who left Vietnam on a boat without her family on December 21, 1980, meeting another young woman, Lien, in a similar situation as hers. Pirates raided the boat on two occasions, raping every woman on the boat.

> The Vietnamese fishing rig was in shambles after this second attack. The pirates towed the boat to Kra Island, eight hours by ship from the coast of Thailand. There Xuan, Lien and the other women were raped until daybreak....By noon Xuan was desperately ill, almost dehydrated, and suffering from profuse vaginal bleeding. Before evening a different group of pirates had landed on the island and taken their turns raping the women. As Xuan said, weeping between words, "I wished to die." By the fifth day, neither Xuan nor

> Lien could walk or even hobble to get out of the hot sun. They just lay on the ground (Burton, 1983).

Both of these women faced overwhelming loneliness after their experiences. While both Xuan and Lien ended up at a women's center in Thailand, neither could talk about their experiences. They felt fear and rejection from others. Rape was never talked about openly by any of the refugees, and some even lied about having been raped. It was only privately that Xuan could bring herself to talk about the incident to her social worker.

> Early one morning...Xuan was sitting alone on a bench in the classroom crying hard. I sat next to her and waited almost fifteen minutes until she finally volunteered the first words. She spoke of being homesick after dreaming of "bad memories about the boat and coming to Thailand."

In camp, there was the opportunity to give women skills for coping both psychologically and economically. However, many women were blocked from such opportunities. In one analysis of educational training in the camps (Kelly, 1978), it was found that women were prevented from taking English classes and from aspiring to vocational jobs. Instead, the men were being prepared to take what this society would consider women's jobs, such as secretaries, garment workers and launderers. Already, shifts in refugees' male and female roles were taking place.

Problems in Adjustment

Adjustment to America is painful regardless of whether one is male or female. Not only are there basic economic survival questions, but also major adjustments to cultural norms that are unknown and foreign. This is the case with any person immigrating to America, but is even more problematic with the refugee. Whereas the immigrant is pulled to his/her target country and therefore is somewhat oriented to its culture, the refugee is pushed from his/her home country (Kunz, 1973). The immigrant is expecting a better life, whereas the refugee may not necessarily have wanted to change his/her old life.

The refugee woman may not have sought change, but is now facing the most dramatic changes she will ever make in her life. These changes include new economic roles and new family roles. Particular problems face those who are female heads of household and those with past traumas.

1) Changing Economic Roles

The question of economic survival in America has led many Southeast Asian women into the work force. Evidence of their importance is reflected in employment statistics. Bach (1979) found that the percentage of refugee women working (42.6 percent) is comparable to the figure for all United States women, whereas the percentage of men working (62.6 percent) is decidedly less than the total male population. In another study, Walters (1981) found that one third of refugee women were employed one year after arrival. Of those employed, 65 percent said they were significant contributors to the family and a full 35 percent said they were the main providers in their family.

Such statistics show the willingness of the female refugee to enter the job market, even if wages are low. Since the jobs available to most refugees are low-paying, the woman's job has become as significant as the man's. In some families, her job has been the sole source of support in the family.

For refugees who are flexible in their interpretation of societal roles, adjustment is less difficult. Some women who had to work in Vietnam in fact adjusted easily to working in America. Other women, especially upper class women who never had to work back in Vietnam, found strengths that they never knew they had. Some have found themselves running small businesses, thus making important decisions. Their main obstacle is in acquiring the aggressiveness to cope with harrassment from the more traditional part of the community. As one woman said, "Learning to be aggressive wasn't as easy as I thought it would be" (Do, 1983).

While the woman's status has been by necessity elevated, there has been a considerable downward shift in the types of jobs men have been able to obtain. Many of them are aware that they are being exploited for wages or expected to work twice as hard as others, yet they feel they must tolerate such frustrations in order to survive. Other men have a great deal of pride and refuse to accept jobs below their stature, leaving the woman to be the breadwinner. Thus, the man loses face. It is not surprising that in a survey done by the Bureau of Research and Training (1979), marital discord was seen as one of the most frequent causes of refugee problems.

A very rigid and frustrated Southeast Asian male may be too proud to take care of the children and do other household duties. Spending his days apathetically staring at walls or drinking, he may strike out at the person closest to him—his wife. The incidence of wife battering is unkown since few women come to report it. Instead, they suffer silently, as their training is to accept their fate and not to think of divorce.

However, there is some indication that the problem of wife battering may be substantial. Statistics for the Rape and Battering shelter run by the Center for the Pacific Asian family in Los Angeles show that in 1982, one third of the 1,429 clients involved in marital rape and battering were Indochinese families (Smith, 1983). Of those, 95 percent were Vietnamese. The Center reports that in such families, it is common for there to be at least one child who is battered, sometimes by a mother who, in her depression, distraction or apathy, doesn't realize what she's doing.

It is in the area of labor force participation that the differences between Southeast Asian groups is most visible. Refugees from Laos and Cambodia come from more rural backgrounds and have not been exposed to Americans as much as Vietnamese have. In one study (Walters, 1981), 40 percent of the Vietnamese were employed, Cambodians at 38 percent, Laos at 23 percent and H'mong at 4 percent. Related to this are literacy levels: 94 percent of the Vietnamese women were literate, 46 percent of the Cambodians, and 50 percent of the Lao, and the H'mong women are almost totally illiterate. Refugees from Laos and Cambodia are especially in need of survival training programs that can orient them to the customs and basic requirements of living in America.

Mrs. Cha's story exemplifies this situation.

> May Sia Cha, a middle-aged H'mong woman, arrived in the United States in 1979 and lives with her husband and three small children. Her husband is working as a janitor...while her oldest child is enrolled in public school. She cannot speak any English and has become increasingly depressed because she is dependent on her husband and children to fill the role traditionally assigned to her. She is unable to attend English classes because of her pre-school children and has isolated herself in her home. She lacks motivation and confidence because she is unable to perform such basic tasks as shopping and caring for the children (Walters, 1981).

2) Changing Family Roles

Increasing in number amongst refugees are the women that are starting to eschew the values that emphasize man's dominance. These are women who, exposed to the new ideas of American culture, reject the idea of arranged marriage and unquestioning obedience. Thus, refugee women are becoming increasingly interested in family planning, but some husbands are opposed to it (Davison, 1981). Gravitating toward aspects of their new culture but not wanting to abandon the old, they experience conflict.

One young twenty-year-old Vietnamese female student says, "I found that in this society, I have to be more aggressive and talkative. If you are submissive you going to get nowhere. My parents are traditional. My father says I shouldn't be too active, and I should be a good housewife. He says I shouldn't be an elephant in high heels." She goes on to talk about the continual conflict she feels. She respects and admires her father, "but I don't fit into the image. My parents are shocked because my sister and I probably will not marry a Vietnamese. I no longer fit into the role of the quiet woman who lives to satisfy the husband." She sees her main problem as being able to fulfill her duty to the family while maintaining her own set of ideals (Chu, 1983).

Other accepted family patterns are changing as well. Housing regulations sometimes limit the number of people per household and have forced families to live separately. In the H'mong community polygamy is an accepted practice. Of course, its illegality in America has resulted in the trauma of forced divorces, broken families, and/or complicated efforts to improvise new relationships (Davison, 1981).

Even if the woman is working, the household is still in the main under her management. Thus, refugee women report that one of their main worries is in the area of parent-child conflict (Davison, 1981). The mother is left with the responsibility of redefining the norms of a family. She must know how to raise the children to survive in this new culture, while making sure they respect the old. And if she is not familiar with the new culture, as may be the case with refugees coming from Laos and Cambodia, there may be significant problems.

Parents have been charged by authorities with child abuse because children have been brought in with streaks on their backs. This is, however, a folk remedy called "rubbing out the wind" used for flus and fevers. Refugee mothers have been criticized for sending children to school barefoot or in pajamas. Mothers are criticized for leaving children unaccompanied or with older siblings, as may be done in the home country.

In addition, children are becoming acclimated faster to the culture than the parents due to training in school. This paves the way for further problems. The children may want to follow customs that are contrary to the parents' wishes. The children may forget their native language and even have difficulty communicating with parents. The children may become translators of American society for the parents, somewhat reversing roles and the lines of authority for the family.

3) Single Females

There is a significant proportion of women amongst the refugees who are heads of household. They may be unaccompanied young women, women who are separated from their husbands, widowed or divorced—but all have special needs. Female heads of household constitute a large part of the Southeast Asian community at 23 percent of the population (Pian, 1980). Of the Asian groups in America, Southeast Asians have the largest proportion of female heads of household. Their numbers reflect the pressures of war: young women whose parents pressured them to leave the country on their own, women who were separated by husbands during the chaos of flight, women widowed due to the war or attacks by pirates, and women who perhaps married G.I.'s or who for other reasons are divorced.

The economic plight of these women reflects the general status of female-headed families in the United States who are usually poor, constituting 51 percent of all families below the poverty level (California Legislature, 1983). Since they are paid less than men, they struggle even harder to make ends meet. They are generally in low-paying, low-mobility jobs with long hours. Family responsibilities such as child care are especially difficult. Not only is income even more scarce than for the married couple, but the woman may be isolated from knowing where available resources are.

In addition, the stigma of being a single woman is difficult to overcome. In one study, female heads of household were one of three subgroups found to be insecure, apprehensive, and overwhelmed (Aylesworth, Ossorio and Osaki, 1980). In particular, divorced/widowed heads of household felt they had the least resources and were the most distressed (Lin, Tazuma and Masuda, 1979). Additional problems face the women who were separated from their husbands during the flight, but cannot get remarried since they do not know whether their husband is still alive. And for those who know they are widows, the more traditional women may not want to challenge their communty which for the most part does not sanction remarriage for women.

Divorce is occurring with greater frequency, and it appears to be as much the result of women's leaving men as men's leaving wives (Davison, 1981). An explanation given for this is that women are starting to realize how much more capable they are of supporting their families than their husbands are. Divorce may also be a problem amongst Vietnamese wives of American servicemen (Kim, 1980). In Vietnam, adjustments may be easier since the husband has his military base, and the woman, her culture. However, in America, the husband may not realize how few resources his wife has. In either case, when divorce occurs, acceptance by the community may be difficult.

4) Coping with Past Trauma

Many refugees are trying to forget the past and do their best to deal with immediate survival questions. They use a common defense mechanism, denial, to downplay the dangers that the war posed to them and instead live a "normal" existence (Tung, 1980). However, the past can interfere with current functioning. Since there is not a tradition of counseling in the Southeast Asian community, such feelings may have difficulty being resolved. In one study, Murphy (1977) administered a measure of psychological dysfunction, the Health Opinion Scale, to Vietnamese and found that women seemed more prone to depression. He surmised that the hardships women endured were of a more severe nature than men's. If there was loss due to the war, men lost sons and brothers, whereas women lost spouses.

In addition, there may be great shame and guilt over such traumas as sexual abuse. Feudal and rigid dictates over women's roles, especially in regard to sexual matters, attach a stigma that may be even greater than in American society. Such matters are usually seen as something to "live with" in stoic silence. This means of coping, however, is not the optimum. The service worker cannot force the issues to emerge; on the other hand, he/she must be sensitive to the problems.

The past also interferes with the peace of mind of women who were forced to engage in prostitution while in Vietnam. It is unknown how many of these women there are, since they understandably try very hard to keep their identities secret. In one case, a former prostitute settled down with her husband in America and manages a small flower shop (Do, 1983). Today, she tries to face her past with quiet determination.

> I know what I did before was wrong. I had nobody to take care of me. My parents were gone and I didn't have any skills. There were many GI's around Main Street, so I took up the job of a call girl. I am married, and I don't like what I did in the past, but people still come up to me and say bad things about me. Sometimes it comes from my husband's family, sometimes it comes from my past clients. But it is all right. I don't say anything to them and they leave me alone.

Solutions

Southeast Asian women are subject to multiple stresses of a different nature than men in the social, economic and cultural spheres. They have been required in the fourteen years since the war ended to use their resources to a greater extent than has been done before.

The following are some suggestions for facilitating adjustment of Southeast Asian women:

1) They need greater knowledge of resources. Refugee women, due to language and culture, may be isolated. They may not know such resources exist. In addition, they may hesitate to use such sources due to cultural inhibitions. There is not a tradition of using government resources for the purpose of handling economic and family problems. A reorientation toward such resources needs to be done through community education.

2) Advocacy must be done for job retraining and greater child care facilities so that women have alternatives to low-mobility jobs. Of particular concern are female heads of household.

3) Women from Laos and Cambodia have problems of illiteracy and unemployment. They need special services to orient them to American society.

4) There needs to be support groups and or a women's center available for refugee women. There is great hesitancy by women to open up in mixed company (Women refugees, 1980). These support groups must be conducted differently than the traditional kind, since Southeast Asian cultures emphasize keeping one's feelings inside. Talking about such problems must be done at the pace of the woman. There is great hesitancy to use mental health services in the refugee community. However, studies have shown (Homma-True, 1980) that in the Asian community, women are more likely than men to use such services and thus may be the key to positive adjustment in the community.

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Vignettes of the Southeast Asian Refugee Woman in America

Fon: The Story of a Single Head of Household

Fon is a thirty-five-year-old widow who has been referred to a counselor by her English instructor. Fon arrived in America 1 1/2 years ago with her three children. A single head of household, she lacks strong language and job skills.

Counselor: Fon, your teacher has asked me to talk to you today because you have not been concentrating in class and also you have not been completing your homework. You have made little progress in the last month. What seems to be the problem?

Fon: ....(looking down) I don't know, I don't have time to study.

Counselor: You have a lot to do?

Fon: Yes, I have the children and I don't have a husband. I have to do everything myself.

Counselor: How much time do you study?

Fon: Very little. About twenty minutes sometimes and maybe fifteen minutes sometimes.

Counselor: I have an idea I hope you want to try. How about staying here after your class to study? You can stay in the classroom or go to the library, or you also can go to the learning center. After you have done your studying, then you go home to your children.

Fon: You mean I stay here?

Counselor: Yes, stay here for one hour or so to do your studying. Would you be willing to try for a little while and see if it works?

Fon: .... mm, I can try first.

Counselor: Good. I will let your teacher know. Since you are here, I want to talk about something else, too. Have you thought about plans for the future?

Fon: ... No. I don't know.

Counselor: Have you thought about going to work?

Fon: No. I don't know. I never worked before and only my husband worked. I don't know what to do.

Counselor: I know your husband took care of the family before, but the situation has changed. You are here alone with your children and the responsibilities have fallen on you. I know it is very hard for you. This is why you are here to learn English and learn to find a job later.

Fon: I don't know what to do. I don't have a skill.

Counselor: There are jobs that don't require skills. I am pretty sure you can do some of those jobs as a start.

Fon: I will not make enough money to support my children.

Counselor: The welfare department will supplement your income since you are a single parent. With the supplement, you should have enough. Do you see any other problem that you might have?

Fon: ..... I will have the money.

Counselor: I believe so.

Fon: .... I don't have anybody to take care of my children.

Counselor: How about your friend?
Fon: My friend goes to school, too.
Counselor: You know the welfare department will allow you to have a certain amount for child care. What do you think about the idea of paying someone to take care of your children?
Fon: I don't like it.
Counselor: I know that is something new for you to consider. I would like you at least to start thinking about things like that.
Fon: ....
Counselor: OK. We'll make arrangements for you to stay after school to study. I will talk to you again later about your plans for the future.

Fon's situation is typical of the woman who has not been quite ready to take responsibility for adjusting to her problems and her children's. After all, before she had a husband with whom to share these responsibilities, and she did not have to work outside of her home. Now, as she explains, she must do everything for herself.

Fon's obstacles to assimilation are not limited to handling the many responsibilities of caring for a family alone and weak language and job skills. Like many refugees, Fon does not know what resources are available to her, such as supplemental income support for single parents. Finally, Fon speaks for many Southeast Asian women when she voices her resistance to having a stranger care for her children.

Generation and Cultures in Conflict

The Cambodian mother in the following scene does not know English, and so she asks her fourteen-year-old daughter to read to her a note she has received.

Mother: Vanna, I want you to read this paper and tell me what it is.
Daughter: (reads the note) Oh, this is a note about your doctor check-up appointment this afternoon at one o'clock.
Mother: The doctor? I am not sick now.
Daughter: This is the follow-up, you know, from the last time you were sick.
Mother: Oh, you will take me to the doctor this afternoon.
Daughter: (Frowning) Mother, you can go by yourself; you know where it is.
Mother: I don't understand what the doctor say; I don't understand English. You have to go with me to help.
Daughter: Oh.... (impatient) Ask Tam to go with you.
Mother: No. I want you to go with me. You are older.
Daughter: I have plans already. I am going to the beach.
Mother: The beach? Who are you going with?
Daughter: Oh, some friends.
Mother: Who are the friend? I don't want you to wear those funny little clothes on the beach.
Daughter: My friends are Mary, Leng, Kim and some others.
Mother: Any boys?
Daughter: .... Yes, just Jim and Tom. You know, from school.
Mother: I thought I told you not to go out with those American boys. I don't want you to go out with them. I don't like to marry American.

Daughter: I am not going to marry a Cambodian anyway.
Mother: You are going to marry a Cambodian and I will make you. I will not allow you to marry American.
Daughter: This is America and we do it the American way. After I am 21 years old, you can't make me.
Mother: We are still Cambodian and you must marry Cambodian.
Daughter: I am not marrying a Cambodian. I am not and you can't make me......(walks away mad)
Mother: Vanna...Vanna! (sigh)

The mother and daughter represent two generations in conflict. The daughter eagerly embraces American culture; she is happy to have American boys as friends, and she probably will wear "funny little clothes" on the beach. When her mother argues for certain values--obedience to the parents, marriage to a Cambodian--the daughter responds by talking about the American way and American law. The daughter may want to be American to be accepted by her friends, but the mother wants the daughter not to reject Cambodian values and way of being.

Their interaction also reveals the frustration of the Southeast Asian woman who has not been assimilated at the same rate as children, who attend American schools and adjust relatively quickly, or men, who were often assumed to be the primary wage-earners and thus the target of assimilation programs in camps and resettlement sites. The older woman has, in some cases, been the most isolated, least assimilated member of her family—particularly if child care responsibilities have kept her at home. Whatever the cause, the mother here feels the frustration common to refugees who find themselves dependent upon others, often their own children.

Marital Conflict and Changes in Roles

When a wife announces that she wants to go to school to learn English, she and her husband have a discussion which illustrates the changes refugee spouses and families face.

Wife: I am thinking about going to study English with Bui at the adult school.
Husband: Why do you want to study English? I want you to stay home and take care of the children.
Wife: Well... I want to start learning English so I can go to work later.
Husband: Work? Why do you want to work? I really want you to take care of my children.
Wife: Well... I don't think you will make enough money for the whole family and I want to work so I can help.
Husband: Whatever I will make we will live on. Don't you worry about that! You better stay home and take care of my children. That's more important!
Wife: Well, no matter about work. I still want just to learn some English. I don't care. I just want to learn English.
Husband: ....OK. You can learn English, but only if your class is not at the same time as mine. I will try this first. If it doesn't work out, you must stop!

The husband's initial rejection of the wife's suggestion that she attend school should not be misconstrued as his desire to keep her isolated and ignorant. Rather, he is acting out of his belief that he should be the one person responsible for providing for his family and that she should take care of their children. His ego may be threatened, but unfortunately the economic reality is that the family needs two incomes, his and hers. Their roles have to change most suddenly.

Small-Group Proceedings

The topics addressed by participants in their small groups were many and varied. In general, however, all of the issues that were raised may be understood as relating either to the refugee women's economic adjustment or to their social adjustment.

Economic Adjustment

It is quite obvious that the economic adjustment of these women hinges on their obtaining employment. Why? A significant number of them are single heads of household. In addition, there are just as many women, and perhaps more, who must work so that the family has two incomes. (When two adults try to support a family on minimum-wage jobs, there are no such things as "primary" and "supplemental" wage earners; both adults must work.) Equally obvious is that the key to the women's employment is vocational and language skills training.[16]

Participants focused on the role of language and language classes in training programs. One problem identified is that some vocational classes, such as electronic assembly classes, require a degree of language proficiency not possessed by many refugees. The classes are not designed for limited-English speakers, and naturally students cannot talk about what they are learning.

How can this situation be improved? One recommendation is that more vocational training projects be developed for the limited-English speaker. Another idea, one which does not preclude exploring the first recommendation, is that vocational English-as-a-second-language (VESL) receive more emphasis so that early in their program students can learn the specialized vocabulary needed for their classes. While participants underlined the importance of having general English classes as a component of all programs, it is clear that regular ESL by itself is not sufficient in some programs.

Participants also noted that some training opportunities are closed to refugees because they often do not have the language proficiency required for acceptance into the program. Language prerequisites for some Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs were seen as false barriers to training. This is unfortunate because it means refugees will not have access to a major source of training and also because the very design of some JTPA programs, with their emphasis on on-the-job training, is exactly what refugees need. On-the-job training, said one job developer, is excellent for helping refugees assimilate and learn English at an increased rate.

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[16] Because participants were familiar with the existing training programs, their discussions, which are presented below, proceeded on the assumption of shared knowledge. Readers who lack this information are encouraged to read Chapter 4's analysis of programs that serve men and women.

Solving this problem is more difficult than just saying, "lower language prerequisites for some JTPA programs." Still, participants did identify a real problem, and a minimal response would appear to be to recommend that private industry councils, which have crucial influence on the job training plans in their areas, be made aware of the problem.[17]

Learning English takes a long time, especially long in the case of refugees who are not literate in their own language. Unfortunately, many vocational programs today are three to six months in duration—time enough to grasp the most basic of survival tools but not time enough for much more. The perception expressed was that in the rush to find jobs for refugees, the goal of long-term assimilation and self-sufficiency is not served. In other words, perhaps we save money now by giving refugees a few months to develop their language, vocational, and employability skills so that they are supposedly job-ready as soon as possible, but what will be the cost later?

One recommendation comes to mind immediately: design programs that last longer—say, one year—so that refugees have the opportunity to prepare themselves to be productive, self-sufficient citizens. An alternative (or additional) option that was suggested is having more learning opportunities at the work site. Although ESL classes have been given at factories at the end of the day, they were not successful because workers did not have transportation home if they stayed late to attend class. Perhaps classes could be given during the day if the work day were extended. Also recommended were tax incentives for employers who made training available.

Finally, the educational needs of older refugee women and young girls were considered. The older women need to learn English, but they cannot keep up with the pace set in most ESL classrooms; also they are not comfortable in the classroom setting. Thus, it was recommended that classes for these women only be held near where they live. They can study at an appropriate pace, and they will be with their peers, near home, in a nonthreatening atmosphere.

One expert in educating refugees expressed concern over the situation of girls who went to American high schools for two or three years but before that had missed several years of education in their own country. Although they may have high school diplomas, the gap in their schooling seriously affected the development of their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Now these young women are not really prepared to succeed in college or move beyond minimum-wage jobs. In fact, the refugees themselves recognize this problem, and many of them are reluctant to take a minimum-wage job for fear of being "ghettoized" and stuck in dead-end jobs.

Solving this problem could involve three options. First, programs that offer ongoing educational opportunities on a part-time basis would allow the young women also to work part-time. As their educatonal deficiencies are corrected, the job ladder can become a reality for them. Second, materials that focus in problem solving and critical thinking should be either identified or developed, so that the women can genuinely take advantage of training programs. Third, existing programs could be extended to include the needed skill areas.

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[17] JTPA programs received limited attention during the dialogue, so the discussion here is similarly brief. Readers are referred to Chapter 4 for a more thorough analysis of JTPA.

Although these recommendations were offered in the context of one group's needs, they actually address the situation of many refugees who may well be heading toward a future of marginal incomes earned from minimum-wage jobs.

Vocational programs were also evaluated in terms of their occupational areas. Participants offered broad and specific recommendations. First, the general recommendation related to the planning of any vocational program. More careful analysis of the local economy was urged—that is, where are the jobs? Furthermore, among these jobs, which suit the refugees' interests and desires? Will these jobs be dead-end? Are the careers ones that traditionally are male-dominated? Is there a variety of entry-level jobs?

Many speakers addressed the need for more educational and training opportunities at higher levels, such as those involving one or two years of college or continuation programs in various fields. A strong need was expressed for recertification programs for professionals. These programs need to be intensive because the students are not in a position to devote three or four years to the process of recertification. Also, intensive ESL classes should be included because recertification usually requires testing. Last, the need for the retraining of professionals in education and health fields was underlined.

The discussion of types of vocational training to be offered raised the issue of occupational awareness among refugees. Refugee parents are not in a position to make their children aware of the range of options, and many refugees have an immediate need for knowledge of careers for persons whose English proficiency is limited. Most programs respond well to these concerns, and those that do not, should. However, another need goes largely unaddressed, and that is ongoing job counseling after placement in the first job. Refugees are like every other worker. They get laid off, they want a new job, they have problems with their boss, they need short- and long-term career goals--but presently a good resource for them is not available. This is because employment services generally end after the ninety-day follow-up made by most service providers.

Two responses to this situation present themselves. First, existing refugee programs could incorporate on-going job counseling. Second, the state employment services could be made sensitive to this relatively new segment of their clientele so that they can work effectively with refugees, handling the aspects of counseling that fall within their purview and making referrals as necessary.

The last variable in the vocational training equation is perhaps the most important--child care. Again and again participants returned to the subject. How can refugee women attend classes and build better lives for themselves if there is no one to watch their children? Typically, child care is not available at the training facility, and the women do not have transportation to child care centers at other sites. Even if they could afford bus fare, the bus system is prohibitively complex to use. Also, child care can cost so much that attending school or working is not feasible.

Moreover, the concept of leaving one's children under the care of a stranger is foreign to Southeast Asian women, and they resist it. (This is less often the case with women who were oriented to child care in the camps.) Their resistance is even stronger if the caretaker is not Indochinese. On the other hand, the mothers also worry about using a Southeast Asian child care provider unless they know the person's medical hstory; specifically, some women fear that the caretaker could have tuberculosis. In short, Southeast Asian mothers are in the same bind facing working mothers: the desire to work or to go to school is counterbalanced by concerns over their children's welfare.

The need for inexpensive, easily accessible, appropriate child care is abundantly clear. Participants recommended having child care arrangements available where the women attend school or work; thus, transportation becomes no problem. If the facilities cannot be where the women are going, then perhaps the provider could pick up the children and take them to the facilities, or the facilities could be located near the refugee women's homes.

Another recommendation is to train Southeast Asian women to become child care providers. The women who were teachers before they came to America are good candidates not only because of their experience, but also because they could fulfill the state requirements for daycare directors more easily than other Indochinese women. On a related note, participants recommended some review of licensing requirements so that potential Southeast Asian caretakers are not unnecessarily locked out of the field. At any rate, the suggestion about teachers deserves further attention because it benefits everyone involved. They find employment and the mothers find caretakers from their own ethnic group.

Having a daycare center near the refugee women's home sparked a discussion about resources for donations and support. Participants suggested that businessmen, churches, local planing commissions, and the state government be asked for support in obtaining facilities. These facilities could also be the site for ongoing orientation activities for the mothers which can be available at the time when they pick up their children.

Besides training, the other major issue in the refugee women's economic adjustment is the role the welfare system plays. One policy, ending benefits after a person has worked 100 hours, is a disincentive to work. The worker may earn less money than he would have received in welfare payments, and he loses medical benefits as well. Choosing to work becomes difficult--practically irresponsible--if it means less money and security for the worker and his family.

Another policy is a disincentive to attend college. Full-time college students lose welfare benefits immediately and medical benefits after one month.

Participants offered recommendations concerning both of these policies. In conjunction with sanctions for choosing welfare over work, there could be supplemental income payments from the government so that workers do not suffer financially for working; also, the cost of medical benefits could be shared by the government and the worker. As for attending college, refugees should consider becoming part-time students so that they can keep their benefits.

Another problem concerning the welfare system exists: it is virtually unintelligble. In one of the small groups, a refugee woman explained her predicament: She lives with her mother and her baby. She is no longer eligible for refugee cash assistance, and her mother is too young to receive Social Security but too old to learn English and find work. The group facilitator, upon hearing her relate these and other details, told her there was an appeal process she could use to try to obtain welfare support. The woman, like most refugees, did not know that; of course, probably there is very little about the welfare system that she does understand. For many refugees, the welfare system is a frightening puzzle, and they live in fear of losing their benefits and being cut off entirely. This is hardly surprising—who does understand the system? One service provider related the story of having a welfare official visit the program to explain the welfare system relative to refugees. At one point, the official had to call his office to ask for further clarification of a point.

Clearly, service providers who work with refugees need to be trained to explain the welfare system effectively.

Social Adjustment

A woman who has been beaten by her husband or is suffering from the traumas of her escape by boat or is feeling the acculturation stress, survivor guilt, and depression that are not uncommon among refugees is not a good candidate for employment. The simple fact is that a certain degree of social adjustment is a prerequisite for economic adjustment. On this topic, participants had much to say.

The need for mental health services was clearly and consistently proclaimed. The problem is lack of funds. Even where agencies do exist, and even if the refugees are aware of their existence, the resources are not highly accessible because of a language and cultural gap between service providers and potential service users. For instance, how can the shelter for abused spouses work with a refugee woman who speaks no English?

Indeed, there is a significant incidence of domestic violence, beyond that which is culturally acceptable. Although women do sometimes beat their husbands, more often it is a case of the man's beating his wife. Frustrated by his lack of employment or inability to be the sole provider for his family, he experiences a loss of self-esteem. The situation is generally kept private, so it is unknown how widespread domestic violence actually is, but service providers agree that it is a real problem in the refugee community.

This is but one example of signs of disorders gone untreated. One need not retell the horrors of war to communicate the point that mental health services are needed.

The next question is how the needed services should be delivered. On this issue participants spoke with one voice: trained bilingual, bicultural counselors are needed. It is not enough to have someone who can, for instance, speak Vietnamese; that person should be a trained counselor. Also, people who make the hiring decisions should not expect to find a multilingual counselor; it is not reasonable to expect someone to speak all the languages loosely grouped under the label "Southeast Asian."

Furthermore, counseling should be culturally appropriate. Consider, for example, a sensitive issue such as family planning. Not only are Southeast Asians unfamiliar with contraceptives, some groups such as the H'mong and I-Mien have essentially witnessed a genocide. Any counseling which fails to respond to these facts will itself fail.

Participants also noted the need for more counselors. It was suggested that business, government, and colleges consider providing scholarships in counseling fields. In fact, Southeast Asian women could be encouraged to explore the possibility of becoming a counselor. An added benefit is that clients and members of the community would have in them excellent, and needed, role models.

Although some aspects of the refugee women's social adjustment indicate the need for mental health services, others indicate the need for cultural orientation for them and their families. Their cultural orientation includes such concerns as understanding American currency and learning how to shop and prepare food, topics which participants said are best taught outside of the classroom, tied to programs the refugees see as worthwhile. It is interesting to note that even in 1984, several years after the arrival of many of these refugees in the United States, a basic introduction to American culture and society is still needed. Clearly, some women have gone unserved by existing programs.

As for the generation conflict depicted in the vignette about the mother and daughter, participants suggested having support groups for parents and children. Parents need to learn about their new culture, and children should be educated about their heritage. Neither group should be pushed into accepting certain values or ways of being but should instead be presented with options. The vehicle for this could be informal activities held at nonthreatening community affairs such as picnics, and bilingual, ethnic persons could act as facilitators.

Issues Related to Economic and Social Adjustment

One widespread problem is that refugees often do not know what resources are available to assist them. Whether the need is related to their economic adjustment or their social adjustment, it appears that refugees sometimes suffer unnecessarily. One service provider told of a refugee who died of hepatitis because the family did not know they could receive free medical care. Another example is presented in the vignette about the female head of household, Fon, who did not know she could receive supplemental income support for her family if she worked.

Participants explained the need for improved networking, coordination, and linkages so that service providers as well as refugees have access to accurate information. Indeed, representatives from two service organizations not currently serving refugees attended the conference to learn about the refugee community. They are capable of serving this population, and their services are needed, but the required linkages had not been established.

The problem, if not its cause, is clear: refugees and service providers need to receive accurate information about existing and needed services. Suggestions for solving this problem include using the refugee "media"—churches; newsletters; bulletin boards in markets, community centers, and welfare agencies--to disseminate information to refugees.

Also, it was recommended that refugees be trained to teach people how to use the services. Another good source of information for refugees could be their teachers. Participants recommended that a resource guide and clearinghouse on available services be given to teachers, who often are in the best position to field questions and detect problems. Furthermore, the teachers should have in-service training or access to written materials on the culture and present circumstances of their students. As for more networking, there presently is a forum of service providers which should help meet the needs described above.

Finally, when policies are developed and programs are planned, they must be done with an understanding of the diversity among Southeast Asian refugees. Ethnic background, sex, and age are all variables that must be considered. The economic and social adjustment of refugees depends upon it.

Conferees called for a conference in one year to see what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.

Chapter 2

CUBAN AND HAITIAN ENTRANTS

Cuban Entrants

Mainly Florida, Mainly Young, and Mainly Male

Of the nearly 125,000 Cuban entrants, the mode average is a young man who resettled in Miami, Florida.[1]

Florida received about 70 percent of the 124,789 Cuban arrivals. Of this portion, about 69 percent settled in Miami and 22 percent settled in Hialeah. Outside of Florida, popular resettlement sites are in northern New Jersey, New York City, and Los Angeles. More detailed information on locations is presented in Tables 2.01, 2.02, 2.03, and 2.04. The reader will note that the number of persons does not remain constant in these tables. This is because some tables report earlier totals (as opposed to the final total of 124,789) and because some tables do not account for persons in detention centers and others do. Nonetheless, the tables are valuable because the patterns in resettlement do not change.

As Table 2.05 indicates, about 70 percent of the entrants are male. The largest group of the entire entrant population is young adults, persons 18 to 29. Among the female entrants alone, the largest percentage is persons age 35 and older, and the smallest, persons age 17 or younger.

The age-sex distributions for the entrant population in the four states with the greatest number of resettlements are summarized in Table 2.06 and presented in detail in Table 2.07. Both tables show that the characteristics of resettled Cuban entrants vary somewhat from state to state. The largest group, Florida's, also has the greatest proportion of women: 34.7 percent. This might be because many family reunification cases stayed in South Florida instead of being processed through the resettlement camps. The proportion of women in the other popular states of destination ranges from 27.6 percent of the New Jersey population to 22 percent of the New York population. Their age distributions also vary a bit; for example, New York has a greater concentration of women age 18 to 44 than do the other states: about 64 percent compared to about 50 percent.

Estimates of Marital Status and Fertility Rates

Although there are no readily available data on the marital status of the entire group, a random sampling of entrants processed at Elgin Air Force Base does yield an estimate:

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[1] For the history behind the term "entrant," please see Appendix A.

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43.4 percent of the women and 33.2 percent of the men reported being currently married.[2] These figures should be viewed as the lower bound of the entire group's proportion of married persons because single men and women were likely to be sent to Elgin for processing, while family groups were likely to be processed elsewhere.

As for fertility rates, again only estimates are available, these being the figures for the entire Cuban population in 1980, not just for entrants. Assuming the entrants' fertility will approximate that of other Cubans in the United States, one must first realize that the fertility of Cuban-born mothers is unique among Hispanic groups in this country. Indeed, as Table 2.08 demonstrates, the "total fertility rate"—the fertility rate for five-year age groups mutiplied by five--is only half that of Hispanics taken as a whole: 1,296 compared to 2,534. Table 2.08 also shows that Cuban mothers tend to be a bit older than other mothers; among Cubans the greatest number of births is to women age 25 to 29, compared to all other mothers' range of 20 to 24 years old.

The distribution of live births by birth order also shows how Cubans are distinguished from other groups. Half of Cuban births are of first children, and 4.7 percent of the births are fourth order or higher. Among all Hispanics these percentages are 37.8 and 16.8, respectively. These figures are presented in Table 2.09.

Finally, in her 1982 report on the impact of both Cuban and Haitian entrants on the demand for social services in Florida, Leslie Lieberman reported that only 10 percent of the Cuban entrants reported a pregnancy in the family in the past year. High fertility is valued by the Cubans; about half of those surveyed did not want to use birth control. Among pregnant women, 77 percent reported regular prenatal care.[3]

Educational Attainment Greater Than Mastery of English

The educational attainment of approximately 63 percent of the entire Cuban entrant population is shown in Table 2.10. At first glance it would appear that entrants at the Opa-Locka reception center were, for some reason, less well educated than their Chaffee-McCoy counterparts. Actually, the former center was more family-oriented and the latter was more single-oriented, and so the distributions at Opa-Locka were understandably affected by the presence of children. The Chaffee-McCoy sampling indicates that over a third of the entrants had six years of education or fewer, 14 percent had seven or eight years of education, 22.1 percent had nine to twelve years of schooling, and 4.5 percent had attended college. In another survey, this one of nearly 2,000 of the earliest arrivals, the average educational attainment was found to be nine years of school, close to the level of the 1970 Cuban arrivals but lower than the 1960 arrivals'.[4]

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[2] Robert L. Bach, "The New Cuban Immigrants: Their Background and Prospects," Monthly Labor Review, 103, No. 10 (Washington, October 1980), p. 42.

[3] Leslie Sue Lieberman, "The Impact of Cuban and Haitian Refugees on State Services: Focus on Health Services Problems in Cross-Cultural Contexts," prepared for the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida, May 1982), p. 17.

[4] Bach, p. 40.

Although neither of these surveys disaggregated the data by sex, a small sampling of Chaffee entrants did, and it revealed that the distribution patterns for men and women were similar. However, the sampling included 1,488 men and only 47 women, so extending that survey's findings to the larger surveys is risky.[5]

Given the relatively high level of education of this population, it is a bit surprising to discover its limited fluency in English. The survey of the earliest boatlift arrivals determined that "almost no one (5 percent) could speak or understand English."[6] Of course, the vast majority of entrants have resettled in what is virtually a bilingual society, so their need to speak English to survive is considerably diminished.

Skilled and Semi-skilled Occupations

Data on both the broad and the specific occupational categories of the Cuban entrants are available, although not by sex. Of those reporting occupations, the greatest numbers were in skilled and semi-skilled trades. The largest percentage was for persons employed in structural work, including construction workers, welders, carpenters, electricians, painters, masons, and plumbers. The occupational groups are presented in Tables 2.11 and 2.12.

Most of the Cubans' skills were directly transferable to the receiving economy. Moreover, the majority of the Cuban entrants resettled in the largest Cuban-American community, a well established enclave able to offer the new arrivals jobs. Thus, although data by post-entry employment experience or income or sex are not readily available, it seems reasonable to assert that the Cuban entrants have been more easily integrated into the employment scene than other newcomers.

Utilization of Public Health Services

The only survey of Cuban entrants' utilization of social support services concerns health services. Leslie Lieberman's survey documented the effect on their demand for public health services. As Table 2.13 indicates, the greatest impact was on the demand for maternal care.

Haitian Entrants

Young Men in Dade County, Florida

Accurate estimates of the number of Haitians who qualify for the entrant category are difficult to make.[7] Indeed, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) estimated that only 40 percent of Haitians entering during the entrant period were registered.[8] Because of the Haitians' fears of deportation and changes in immigration policy, it is believed that many Haitians prefer not to make themselves known to INS. Another complicating factor is that two sets of records have been kept: one for those who were processed by INS immediately upon entry (EPIs) and one for those who entered without inspection (EWIs). Finally, during the days that Haitians were arriving in a steady stream of something less than 100 per day, a manual counting system was used and not all figures were consistently included in reports.

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[5] Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 13.

[6] Bach, p. 40.

[7] For the history behind the term "entrant," please see Appendix A.

Nevertheless, the sociodemographics of this group are "extreme" enough to afford a reliable impression. Table 2.14 presents the monthly, yearly, and cumulative totals for this population, and its age and sex distributions are shown in Table 2.15. About two thirds of the population are men. The largest proportion of both men and women is persons age 18 to 29; the next greatest is persons age 30 to 44. Finally, as Table 2.16 indicates, 87.7 percent of this group has resettled in Florida; of this number, almost all resettled in Dade County.

Single Entrants in Their Peak Childbearing Years

The best data on the marital status of the Haitian entrants are not disaggregated by sex, nor are they necessarily indicative of the entire Haitian population in the United States. The great majority of those entering up through June 1981 were single: about three quarters of those whose marital status was known. Another 20 percent were married, and another 2 percent were widowed or divorced.[9] However, it is likely that the entire Haitian population is more normal in its marital status distribution.

An excellent source of information on this population is a 1982 study of the Edison-Little River neighborhood in Dade County, Florida, which was conducted by the Behavioral Science Research Institute (BSRI). Although the study was not confined to Haitians whose date of entry placed them in the entrant category, it did report results for an area with nearly 23,000 Haitians. Thus, it has much to contribute to the study of the entrant population.

Specifically, the BSRI study addressed fertility rates by asking about the number of pregnancies within the prior year. It found that nearly 30 percent of the households had at least one pregnancy.[10] Sixty-one percent of the pregnant women were age 20 to 29; 34 percent were age 30 to 34; and teenagers accounted for the remaining 5 percent.[11]

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[8] Robert A. Ladner and Loretta S. Titterud, "Demography, Social Status, Housing, and Social Needs of the Haitian Population of Edison-Little River," prepared for the City of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida: Behavioral Science Research Institute, 1983), p. 3.

[9] Cuban-Haitian Task Force, May 1981, p. 7.

[10] Ladner and Titterud, Table 20.

[11] Ladner and Titterud, Table 19.

The age distributions of the BSRI sample suggest a population that will sustain high birth rates at least until the year 2000. The researchers reported that slightly over half the Haitian population will be able to bear children over the next 10 years: the largest age cohort within the high-fecundity group—the 20-30 year olds—accounts for about 28 percent of the total. This group will remain in the high-fecundity category for an additional 10 years. As the 30+ cohort passes its childbearing years, it will be replaced almost exactly by younger children, sustaining high birth rates for the Haitian population well into the year 2000.[12]

Household Data

The BSRI study found that the average household had 3.9 persons. This figure compares with 2.6 for Dade county as a whole and for the City of Miami. Even the larger households of Dade County blacks, which had 3.3 persons, were smaller than Haitian households.[13]

Conflicting Reports on Educational Attainment and Language Skills

Conflicting information concerning the entrants' educational attainment exists. In Table 2.17, the figures of a 13 percent sample are shown. In this sample, the majority had one to six years of education. The reader will note the higher attainment of the EWIs (persons who registered with INS during the moratorium on deportation), perhaps the result of education attained since entering the United States.

The BSRI study produced the figures on educational attainment by year of entry which are given in Table 2.18. The figures for post-secondary education are so high as to be questionable. Perhaps the fact that the first year of education in Haiti is called grade twelve and "senior high school" is grade one caused confusion among respondents. On the other hand, school enrollments in America were found to be very high, so it might well be that the Haitian population has educated itself in its new country. This interpretation, however, still cannot account for the high levels reported by the 1980 and 1981-82 arrivals.

The BSRI study also looked at English fluency. Forty-eight percent of the respondents said that they were fluent in English and 36 percent said that they could speak English "a little."[14] The lower bound of these estimates comes from Leslie Lieberman, who reports that "it is estimated that one fourth of the [Haitian] entrants are completely illiterate in any language and an additional one fourth have very low level language skills."[15]

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[12] Ladner and Titterud, p. 14.

[13] Ladner and Titterud, p. 12. Again, the reader is reminded that these figures are not for entrants only.

[14] Ladner and Titterud, Table 3.

[15] Lieberman, p. 33.

Occupational Distribution: Low Skill Mix for an Urban Society

Tables 2.19 and 2.20 present the broad and specific occupational categories of the Haitian entrants. Of those reporting occupations codable according to the Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles, 31.5 percent had jobs in the broad category of agriculture and fishery, most of these being in field crop farming. The second largest proportion of the entrants, 22.9 percent, identified occupations in the broad category of "benchwork," mainly jobs as tailors and dressmakers. Only 4.3 percent cited professional/technical/managerial occupations.

The BSRI study confirmed the relatively low skill mix among the more recently arrived Haitians. As Table 2.21 indicates, the highest proportion of workers with white collar jobs was for the earlier arrivals: 12 percent of those arriving in 1977 or before then compared to 4 percent of the other groups. The earlier arrivals also had the highest proportion of skilled manual laborers. In contrast, the unskilled workers were more frequently represented in the later groups. Those Haitian who are marginally skilled, Liebermen reports, have found jobs in construction, housekeeping, marine-related fields, and landscaping.[16]

High Unemployment Rates

The unemployment rate shown in Table 2.21 is extraordinarily high, but half of this can be attributed to the responses given by migrant workers during the survey period, which was the agricultural off-season. Many of the unemployed cited as their reason for not being employed "gave up looking."[17] Unfortunately, this response fails to explain why they "gave up," in essence, the more telling reason behind the stated reason. The body of related anecdotal evidence on this point is, however, of sufficient size and consistency to provide help. Not only have Haitians been held back because of their limited job and language skills, they also face some employers who are leery of hiring them because of the group's purported link with acquired immune deficiency syndrome. Other employers are wary of hiring persons with the ambiguous legal status "entrant." (Cubans, of course, share the label, but they have the acceptance and assistance of the already-established Cuban business community—not to mention better job skills.)

Income Increases with Length of Residence

The incomes of the Haitians sampled in the BSRI survey were low. According to Table 2.22, over one third of this population earned less than $100 per week, and approximately two thirds earned under $150 per week. The incomes are lowest among the more recently arrived groups. For example, of the persons who entered America in 1980, 43 percent earned less than $100 per week and 37 percent earned between $100 and $149 per week, compared with 27 percent and 26 percent, respectively, of the earliest arrivals. Furthermore, whereas only 13 percent of the 1981-82 arrivals earned between $150 and $199 per week, 30 percent of those who had been in the United States the longest earned that much. Thus, one can conclude that as the Haitians adjust to their new environment, their incomes increase—but, as the figures on households earning $200 or more a week suggest, that does not mean the Haitians have arrived at a comfortable state.

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[16] Lieberman, p. 13.

[17] Ladner and Titterud, Table 8.

Participation in Assistance Programs: Relatively Low

Given these income figures, it is surprising that more households did not receive food stamps. (See Table 2.23.) Even among the most marginal of the Haitian groups, the 1980 arrivals, less than one third received food stamps. Seventeen percent of the 1980 group also reported receiving "government assistance." In general, the BSRI survey revealed that in comparison to their earlier counterparts, the more recently arrived Haitians were less likely to have incomes from a job and were more likely to depend upon other sources of income.

Probing the level of utilization among households where the head is unemployed, the BSRI study produced the results given in Table 2.24. For all sources of income, as the BSRI study terms these supportive services, the levels of utilization were higher in these households than in Table 2.23's households where only some heads were unemployed.

Finally, the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services reported that these entrants represented an appreciable porportion of the case load. The specific figures, which are presented in Table 2.25, indicate that maternal services were the most frequently sought.

TABLE 2.01

Total Cuban Entrant Resettlements, by State: March 31, 1981

State	Number of Resettlements	Percent of Resettlements
Alabama	124	0.1
Alaska	6	0.0
Arizona	205	0.2
Arkansas	402	0.3
California	5,112	4.3
Colorado	165	0.1
Connecticut	315	0.3
Delaware	20	0.0
Florida	86,466	73.1
Georgia	429	0.3
Hawaii	10	0.0
Idaho	16	0.0
Illinois	1,698	1.4
Indiana	127	0.1
Iowa	54	0.0
Kansas	174	0.1
Kentucky	41	0.0
Louisiana	818	0.7
Maryland	314	0.3
Maine	26	0.0
Massachusetts	527	0.4
Michigan	311	0.3
Minnesota	366	0.3
Mississippi	20	0.0
Missouri	228	0.1
Montana	5	0.0
Nebraska	97	0.1
Nevada	373	0.3
New Hampshire	8	0.0
New Jersey	7,721	6.4
New Mexico	253	0.2
New York	6,127	5.1
North Carolina	57	0.0
North Dakota	9	0.0
Ohio	185	0.2

TABLE 2.01 (continued)
Total Cuban Entrant Resettlements, by State: March 31, 1981

State	Number of Resettlements	Percent of Resettlements
Oklahoma	359	0.3
Oregon	186	0.2
Pennsylvania	1,073	0.9
Rhode Island	71	0.1
South Carolina	37	0.0
South Dakota	9	0.0
Tennessee	242	0.2
Texas	1,700	1.3
Utah	93	0.1
Vermont	4	0.0
Virginia	233	0.2
Washington	118	0.1
Washington, D.C.	365	0.3
West Virginia	37	0.0
Wisconsin	916	0.8
Wyoming	20	0.0
Puerto Rico	945	0.8
Other Countries	69	0.1
Unknown	399	0.3
TOTAL	119,685	99.9%

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for March 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Appendix C.

TABLE 2.02

Total Cuban Resettlements, by State: May 31, 1981

State	Number of Resettlements	Percent of Resettlements[a]	Pre-boatlift Cuban-American Population[a]
Florida	86,608	71.4	500,000
New Jersey	7,793	6.4	82,500
New York	6,248	5.1	90,000
California	5,451	4.5	40,000
Texas	1,849	1.5	7,000
Illinois	1,801	1.5	17,000
Pennsylvania	1,118	0.9	3,000
Puerto Rico	948	0.8	20,000
Wisconsin	926	0.8	b
Louisiana	827	0.7	9,000
Massachusetts	592	0.5	7,000
Subtotal	114,162	94.1	
Other States	6,753	5.1	
Other Countries	69	0.1	
Unknown	399	0.3	
TOTAL	121,383	100.0%	

[a] 1980 estimates from the Cuban-National Planning Council

[b] Not available

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 8.

TABLE 2.03

Total Cuban Entrant Resettlement in Florida, by City: April 1981

Florida City	Number of Resettlements	Percent of Florida Resettlements[a]	Percent of Total Resettlements[a]
Miami	59,422	68.6	49.2%
Hialeah	18,800	21.7	15.6
Tampa	1,340	1.6	1.1
Miami Beach	765	0.9	0.6
Carol City	611	0.7	0.5
West Palm Beach	544	0.6	0.4
Opa-Locka	496	0.6	0.4
Coral Gables	434	0.5	0.4
Key West	383	0.4	0.3
Orlando	338	0.4	0.3
Fort Lauderdale	327	0.4	0.3
Hollywood	210	0.2	0.2
Other Florida	2,899	3.3	2.4
TOTAL	86,569	100.0	71.7

[a] Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for April 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 4.

TABLE 2.04

Total Cuban Entrant Resettlements Outside Florida, by Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area: April 1981

Metropolitan Area	Number of Resettlements	Percent of Total Resettlements
Northern New Jersey	6,560	5.4
New York, NY	4,320	3.6
Los Angeles, CA	2,073	1.7
Chicago, IL	1,396	1.2
Washington, DC	573	0.5
New Orleans, LA	525	0.4
Las Vegas, NV	376	0.3
Houston, TX	353	0.3
Boston, MA	302	0.3
Dallas, TX	263	0.2
San Francisco, CA	263	0.2
Atlanta, GA	259	0.2
San Diego, CA	259	0.2
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	247	0.2
Nashville, TN	221	0.2

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for April 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 5.

TABLE 2.05

Percent Distribution of Total Cuban Entrant Population, by Age and Sex: March 1981

Age	Female		Male		Unknown		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-5	2,620	2.1	2,995	2.4	-		5,615	4.5
6-12	4,617	3.7	5,241	4.2	-		9,858	7.9
13-15	1,248	1.0	1,497	1.2	-		2,745	2.2
16-17	2,121	1.7	2,246	1.8	-		4,367	3.5
18-24	5,366	4.3	15,224	12.2	-		20,590	16.5
25-29	3,993	3.2	15,973	12.8	-		19,966	16.0
30-34	3,744	3.0	13,228	10.6	-		16,972	13.6
35-44	5,366	4.3	16,597	13.3	-		21,963	17.6
45-64	5,990	4.8	11,106	8.9	-		17,096	13.7
65+	2,621	2.1	2,246	1.8	-		4,867	3.9
Unknown	125	0.1	499	0.4	126	0.1	750	0.6
TOTAL	37,811	30.3	86,852	69.6	126	0.1	124,789	100.0

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for March 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 7.

TABLE 2.06

Percent Distribution of Total Cuban Entrant Population in Selected States, by Age and Sex: March 1981

	Florida	New Jersey	New York	California	Other States	Total Population
Total State Resettlements(N)	86,466	7,721	6,127	5,112	19,363	124,789
Sex						
Female	34.7	27.6	22.0	23.5	18.3	30.3
Male	65.4	72.4	77.8	76.4	81.7	69.6
Age						
0-17	20.7	16.4	11.2	14.4	12.7	18.1
18-29	28.4	32.4	39.2	35.5	45.6	32.5
30-44	30.7	34.8	35.0	32.6	30.0	31.2
45-64	14.8	13.2	11.5	13.3	9.5	13.7
65+	4.7	2.9	1.9	3.4	1.6	3.9
Unknown	0.7	0.4	1.2	0.7	0.6	0.6

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for March 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 8.

TABLE 2.07

Percent Distribution of Total Cuban Entrant Population in Selected States, by Age and Sex: March 1981

Florida

Age	Female		Male		Unknown		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent[a]
0-5	2,070	2.4	2,340	2.7		-	4,410	5.1
6-12	3,759	4.3	4,176	4.8		-	7,935	9.2
13-15	1,041	1.2	1,187	1.4		-	2,228	2.6
16-17	1,673	1.9	1,598	1.8		-	3,271	3.8
18-24	3,918	4.5	8,300	10.0		-	12,218	14.1
25-29	3,012	3.5	9,370	10.8		-	12,382	14.3
30-34	2,976	3.4	8,262	9.6		-	11,238	13.0
35-44	4,290	5.0	10,998	12.7		-	15,288	17.7
45-64	5,035	5.8	7,752	9.0		-	12,787	14.8
65+	2,207	2.6	1,887	2.2		-	4,094	4.7
Unknown	104	0.1	319	0.4	192	0.2	615	0.7
TOTAL	30,085	34.5	56,189	65.4	192	0.2	86,466	100.0

New Jersey

Age	Female		Male		Unknown		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent[a]
0-5	154	2.0	162	2.1		-	316	4.1
6-12	255	3.3	324	4.2		-	579	7.5
13-15	62	0.8	77	1.0		-	139	1.8
16-17	100	1.3	131	1.7		-	231	3.0
18-24	316	4.1	924	12.0		-	1,240	16.1
25-29	262	3.4	994	12.9		-	1,256	16.3
30-34	224	2.9	940	12.2		-	1,164	15.1
35-44	325	4.2	1,195	15.5		-	1,520	19.7
45-64	317	4.1	701	9.1		-	1,018	13.2
65+	116	1.5	108	1.4		-	224	2.9
Unknown	4	0.0	23	0.3	7	0.1	34	0.4
TOTAL	2,135	27.6	5,579	72.4	7	0.1	7,721	100.0

(continued)

TABLE 2.07 (continued)

Percent Distribution of Total Cuban Entrant Population in Selected States, by Age and Sex: March 1981

New York

Age	Female		Male		Unknown		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent[a]
0-5	92	1.5	104	1.7		-	196	3.2
6-12	129	2.1	153	2.5		-	282	4.6
13-15	31	0.5	43	0.7		-	74	1.2
16-17	55	0.9	80	1.3		-	135	2.2
18-24	239	3.9	901	14.7		-	1,140	18.6
25-29	196	3.2	1,066	17.4		-	1,262	20.6
30-34	141	2.3	846	13.8		-	987	16.1
35-44	221	3.6	937	15.3		-	1,158	18.9
45-64	178	2.9	527	8.6		-	705	11.5
65+	55	0.9	61	1.0		-	116	1.9
Unknown	12	0.2	49	0.8	11	0.2	72	1.2
TOTAL	1,249	22.0	4,767	77.8	11	0.2	6,127	100.0

California

Age	Female		Male		Unknown		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent[a]
0-5	77	1.5	102	2.0		-	179	3.5
6-12	153	3.0	184	3.6		-	337	6.6
13-15	36	0.7	51	1.0		-	87	1.7
16-17	61	1.2	72	1.4		-	133	2.6
18-24	184	3.6	728	14.2		-	912	17.8
25-29	123	2.4	784	15.3		-	907	17.7
30-34	138	2.7	605	11.8		-	743	14.5
35-44	174	3.4	751	14.7		-	925	18.1
45-64	178	3.5	501	9.8		-	679	13.3
65+	72	1.4	102	2.0		-	174	3.4
Unknown	9	0.1	25	0.5	8	0.1	36	0.7
	1,199	23.5	3,905	76.4	8	0.1	5,112	100.0

[a]May not equal 100.0% due to rounding

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for March 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Appendix D.

TABLE 2.08

Fertility Rate, by Age and Origin of Mother: 1980[a]

	Origin					
		Hispanics				
Age	All Origins[b]	All Hispanics	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Other[c]
10-14 years	1.2	1.7	1.9	2.3	0.3	0.9
15-19 years	55.2	82.2	95.6	83.0	25.3	52.3
15-17 years[d]	33.9	52.1	--	--	--	--
18-19 years[d]	85.7	126.9	--	--	--	--
20-24 years	117.8	156.4	176.8	133.3	80.2	123.7
25-29 years	114.1	132.1	147.1	98.5	84.1	118.6
30-34 years	64.4	83.2	95.2	58.7	48.4	74.1
35-39 years	21.5	39.9	48.4	26.9	17.2	33.9
40-44 years	4.3	10.6	14.2	6.1	3.6	8.0
45-49 years	0.2	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.1	0.7

[a] Twenty-two reporting states; fertility rate is live births per 1,000 women.
[b] Includes origin not stated.
[c] Includes Central and South American and other and unknown Hispanic.
[d] Population data to compute rates not available for specific Hispanic-origin groups.

Source: Stephanie J. Ventura, "Births of Hispanic Parentage, 1980," Monthly Vital Statistics Report, 32, No. 6 (September 23, 1983), Table 5.

TABLE 2.09

Percent Distribution of Live Births, by Birth Order and Origin of Mother: 1980[a]

Birth Order	Origin of Mother						
		Hispanics					
	All Origins[b]	All Hispanics	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central & South American	Other[c]
First	42.8	37.8	36.3	39.3	50.4	41.5	41.6
Second	31.5	28.5	27.7	29.4	33.4	31.8	30.0
Third	15.1	16.9	17.1	17.7	11.5	16.3	16.1
Fourth	5.9	8.2	8.8	7.8	3.0	6.2	6.8
Fifth	2.4	3.9	4.4	3.1	0.9	2.2	2.7
Sixth and over	2.3	4.7	5.7	2.7	0.8	2.0	2.8

[a] Twenty-two reporting states.

[b] Includes origin not stated.

[c] Includes unknown.

Source: Stephanie J. Ventura, "Births of Hispanic Parentage, 1980," Monthly Vital Statistics Report, 32, No. 6 (September 23, 1983), Table 8.

TABLE 2.10

Educational Attainment of Sampling of Cuban Entrant Population, by Processing Center

	Chaffee-McCoy		Opa-Locka		Total	
Years	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent[a]
None	4,336	11.5	7,463	17.9	11,799	14.8
1-6	9,492	25.1	16,799	40.3	26,291	33.1
7-8	5,294	14.0	--		5,294	6.7
9-12	8,357	22.1	12,599	30.2	20,956	26.4
College (1-4 or graduate)	1,711	4.5	2,047	4.9	3,758	4.7
Graduate or professional school	119	0.3	631	1.5	750	0.9
Technical	--	--	704	1.7	704	0.9
Unknown	8,459	22.4	1,456	3.5	9,915	12.5
TOTAL	37,768	100.0	41,699	100.0	79,467	100.0

[a] Percentages may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for January 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 11.

TABLE 2.11

Broad Occupation Categories of Sampling of Cuban Entrant Population[a]

Occupational Category	Number	Percent[b]
0/1 Professional/Technical/ Managerial	4,702	11.9
2 Clerical/Sales	2,147	5.4
3 Service	6,344	16.1
4 Agriculture/Fishery	1,444	3.6
5 Processing	626	1.5
6 Machine Trades	4,163	10.6
7 Benchwork	1,530	3.9
8 Structural Work	12,038	30.6
9 Miscellaneous	6,235	15.8
DOT-coded Occupation Subtotal	39,229	100.0
Non-codables	24,107	
TOTAL	63,336	

[a] Based on Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles, fourth edition, 1977.

[b] Percentages may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 9.

TABLE 2.12

Detailed Occupational Categories of Sampling of Cuban Entrant Population[a]

	Occupational Category	Number	Percent[b]
(913)	Drivers (Passenger Vehicles)	3,570	9.1
(620)	Motorized Vehicle Mechanics	2,905	7.4
(869)	Misc. Construction	2,618	6.6
(301)	Housewives	2,589	6.5
(810)	Welders	1,937	4.9
(860)	Carpenters	1,558	3.9
(313)	Chefs and Cooks	1,523	3.9
(824)	Electricians and Helpers	1,344	3.4
(840)	Construction and Maintenance Painters	1,300	3.3
(861)	Brick and Stone Masons	1,147	2.9
(905)	Truck Drivers	1,115	2.8
(099)	Teachers	950	2.4
(850)	Excavating and Grading	945	2.4
(404)	Field Crop Farmers	791	2.0
(249)	Processing Fish	662	1.7
(929)	Tractor Operators	629	1.6
(862)	Plumbers	529	1.3
(160)	Accountants and Auditors	381	.9
(330)	Barbers	355	.9
(699)	Machine Operators	326	.8
	Others	12,055	30.7
TOTAL		39,229	100.0

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[a] Based on Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles, fourth edition, 1977.

[b] Percentages may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 10.

TABLE 2.13

Utilization of Public Health Services by Cuban Entrants, by Program: March 1982

Program	Number	Percent of Total
Family Planning	1,696	5.2
Infant/Child/Adolescent Health Services	577	3.9
Maternal Health Services	47	7.0
Maternal and Infant Care Project (MIC) Infants	647	4.5
(MIC) Maternal	970	8.6
Women, Infants and Children Project (WIC)	651	3.3
Children's Medical Services (CMS)	1,293	0.04

Source: Leslie Sue Lieberman, "The Impact of Cuban and Haitian Refugees on State Services: Focus on Health Services Problems in Cross-Cultural Contexts," prepared for the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida, May 1982), Table V.

TABLE 2.14
Haitian Admissions, by Date of Entry and Status: Pre-1976 to May 1981

Date of Entry	Total: Monthly/ Yearly	Total: Cum-lative	Status: INS Exclusion Cases (EPI)[a]	Status: INS Deportation Cases (EWI)[b]	Status: Other
Pre-1976	3,464	3,464	398	3,040	26
1976	1,684	5,148	156	1,519	9
1977	1,700	6,848	209	1,483	8
1978	3,916	10,764	987	2,890	39
1979	4,449	15,213	2,128	2,250	71
1980	24,562	39,775	13,198	10,225	1,239
1980 Jan	1,165	16,378	502	639	24
Feb	1,006	17,384	164	808	34
Mar	2,123	19,507	889	1,192	42
Apr	2,219	21,726	1,004	1,177	38
May	2,672	24,398	1,081	1,502	89
Jun	2,223	26,621	1,048	1,079	96
Jul	1,700	28,321	890	698	112
Aug	2,462	30,783	1,585	708	169
Sep	3,300	34,083	2,155	890	255
Oct	3,267	37,350	2,504	669	94
Nov	1,198	38,548	688	431	79
Dec	1,227	39,775	688	432	107
1981 Jan	1,138	40,913	675	463	0
Feb	627	41,540	316	311	0
Mar[c]	1,386	42,926	610	774	2
Apr[c]	940	43,866	460	477	3
May[c]	1,014	44,880	769	106	139

[a] EPI-entered and processed immediately

[b] EWI-entered without inspection

[c] File incomplete

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 2.

TABLE 2.15

Percent Distribution of Haitian Entrant Population, by Age and Sex: January 1981

	Female		Male		Unknown		Total	
Age	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-5	270	1.1	370	1.5	51	0.2	691	2.8
6-12	266	1.1	295	1.2	42	0.2	603	2.4
13-15	94	0.4	96	0.4	5	0.0	195	0.8
16-17	281	1.1	375	1.5	6	0.0	662	2.7
18-24	1,960	7.9	4,155	16.8	52	0.2	6,167	24.9
25-29	2,257	9.1	5,642	22.8	69	0.3	7,968	32.2
30-34	1,078	4.4	2,459	9.9	41	0.2	3,578	14.5
35-44	999	4.0	2,477	10.0	33	0.2	3,509	14.2
45-64	300	1.2	811	3.3	9	0.0	1,129	4.5
65+	20	0.1	26	0.1	0	0.0	46	0.2
Unknown	25	0.1	52	0.2	127	0.5	204	0.8
TOTAL	7,550	30.5	16,758	67.7	435	1.8	24,743	100.0

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for January 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 3.

TABLE 2.16

Haitian Entrant Resettlements, by State

State	Percent of Resettlements
Florida	
Dade County	73.2%
Palm Beach County	9.6
Broward County	3.7
Other Florida	1.2
Total Florida	87.7
New York	5.0
New Jersey	1.3
Other States	1.2
Unknown	4.8
TOTAL	100.0

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, p. 4.

TABLE 2.17
Educational Attainment of Haitian Entrants, by Status

Number of Years of Education[a]	INS Exclusion Case (EPI)[b]		INS Deportation Cases (EWI)[c]		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1-6	1,478	61.7	1,716	46.4	3,194	7.0
7-8	403	16.8	836	22.6	1,239	2.7
9-12[d]	516	21.5	1,147	31.0	1,663	3.6
Subtotal	2,397	100.0	3,699	100.0	6,096	13.5
Unknown	--	--	--	--	39,447	86.5
TOTAL	2,397	5.3	3,699	8.1	45,573	100.0

[a] The first year of Haitian education is grade 12; grade 1 is "senior high school."

[b] EPI--entered and processed immediately.

[c] EWI--entered without inspection.

[d] The validity of some higher education that was reported was questioned. These cases have been included in the unknown category.

Source. Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 6.

TABLE 2.18

Educational Attainment of Haitians, by Year of Entry

Years of Education	Year of Entry 1977 or earlier	1978-9	1980	1981-2	Total
0-6 years	21%	30%	31%	32%	27%
7-9 years	32	28	39	28	33
10-12 years	28	27	20	20	25
13+ years	19	15	10	20	15
Number	396	260	321	125	1105

Source: Robert A. Ladner and Loretta S. Titterud, "Demography, Social Status, Housing, and Social Needs of the Haitian Population of Edison-Little River," prepared for the City of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida: Behavioral Science Research Institute, 1983), Table 11.

TABLE 2.19

Broad Occupation Categories of Sampling of Haitan Entrants[a]

	Occupational Category	Number	Percent[b]
0/1	Professional/Technical/ Managerial	798	4.3
2	Clerical/Sales	1,574	8.5
3	Service	2,170	11.7
4	Agriculture/Fishery	5,826	31.5
5	Processing	40	.2
6	Machine Trades	1,131	6.1
7	Benchwork	4,232	22.9
8	Structural Work	1,786	9.6
9	Miscellaneous	882	4.7
DOT-coded Occupation Subtotal		18,439	100.0
Non-codables		20,124	
TOTAL		38,553	

[a] Based on Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles, fourth edition, 1977.

[b] Percentages may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 198 , Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 4.

TABLE 2.20

Detailed Occupational Categories of Sampling of Haitian Entrants[a]

	Occupational Category	Number	Percent[b]
(404)	Field Crop Farming	4,991	27.0
(785)	Tailors and Dressmakers	3,676	19.9
(291)	Vendors	1,444	7.8
(309)	Domestic Service	764	4.1
(449)	Fishery and Related	644	3.4
(913)	Drivers (Passenger)	579	3.1
(860)	Carpenters and Related	489	2.6
(861)	Brick and Stone Masons	411	2.2
(301)	Household and Related	325	1.7
(099)	Occupations in Education	294	1.5
(313)	Chefs and Cooks	241	1.2
(810)	Welders and Cutters	228	1.1
(840)	Painters	211	1.1
(318)	Kitchen Workers	209	1.1
(911)	Water Transportation Occup.	201	1.0
(824)	Electrical Workers	182	0.9
(369)	Misc. Construction	130	0.7
(381)	Porters/Cleaners	115	0.6
(144)	Fine Artists	106	0.5
(160)	Accounting Occupations	103	0.5
	Other	3,096	16.7
TOTAL		18,439	100.0

[a] Based on Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles, fourth edition, 1977.

[b] Percentages may not equal 100.0% due to rounding.

Source: Cuban-Haitian Task Force, "Monthly Entrant Data Report" for May 1981, Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Table 5.

TABLE 2.21

Occupations of Haitians, by Year of Entry

Occupation	Year of Entry 1977 or earlier	1978-9	1980	1981-2	Total
White coller	12%	4%	4%	4%	7%
Skilled manual	16	10	12	14	13
Semi-skilled	28	34	27	15	28
Unskilled	13	25	18	20	18
Unemployed	31	27	39	47	34
Number	396	260	321	125	1105

Source: Robert A. Ladner and Loretta S. Titterud, "Demography, Social Status, Housing, and Social Needs of the Haitian Population of Edison-Little River," prepared for the City of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida: Behavioral Science Research Institute, 1983), Table 11.

TABLE 2.22

Weekly Household Income of Haitians, by Year of Entry

Weekly Household Income	Year of Entry 1977 or earlier	1978-9	1980	1981-2	Total
$ 0-$ 99	27%	31%	43%	47%	35%
$100-$149	26	38	37	27	32
$150-$199	30	18	14	13	21
$200+	17	13	6	13	12
Number	396	260	321	125	1105

Source: Robert A. Ladner and Loretta S. Titterud, "Demography, Social Status, Housing, and Social Needs of the Haitian Population of Edison-Little River," prepared for the City of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida: Behavioral Science Research Institute, 1983), Table 11.

TABLE 2.23

Sources of Income of Haitians, by Year of Entry

Sources of Income (% Yes)	Year of Entry 1977 or earlier	1978-9	1980	1981-2	Total
Social Security	12%	7%	3%	4%	7%
Government assistance	6	17	17	17	13
Food stamps	25	30	31	23	28
Income from job	85	79	77	65	79
Other assistance	8	14	12	20	12
Number	396	260	321	125	1105

Source: Robert A. Ladner and Loretta S. Titterud, "Demography, Social Status, Housing, and Social Needs of the Haitian Population of Edison-Little River," prepared for the City of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida: Behavioral Science Research Institute, 1983). Table 11.

TABLE 2.24

Sources of Income in Haitian Households Where Head of Household is Unemployed

Source	Percent of Households
Income from other family members	41
Food stamps	36
Other sources of income	28
Government assistance	20
Social Security/SSI	17
None of the above income sources	3

Source: Robert A. Ladner and Loretta S. Titterud, "Demography, Social Status, Housing, and Social Needs of the Haitian Population of Edison-Little River," prepared for the City of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida: Behavioral Science Research Institute, 1983), Table 9.

TABLE 2.25

Utilization of Public Health Services by Haitian Entrants, by Program: March 1982

Program	Number	Percent of Total
Family Planning	833	2.5
Infant/Child/Adolescent Health Services	506	3.5
Maternal Health Services	72	10.9
Maternal and Infant Care Project (MIC) Infants	1,380	9.5
(MIC) Maternal	1,439	12.7
Women, Infants and Children Project (WIC)	1,243	6.3
Children's Medical Services (CMS)	129	.004

Source: Leslie Sue Lieberman, "The Impact of Cuban and Haitian Refugees on State Services: Focus on Health Services Problems in Cross-Cultural Contexts," prepared for the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida, May 1982), Table V.

Haitian Women's Conference

Miami-Dade Community College
September 28, 1984

Haitian women, service providers, educators, and representatives from local government and businesses attended the Haitian Women's Conference. The conference was completely bilingual, with Creole-English translators interpreting all papers and remarks at regular intervals. The morning was given over to the presentation of three papers and comments and questions from the audience. In the afternoon, the participants divided themselves into three groups to identify the needs of the entrant women and offer related recommendations. The conference ended with everyone reconvening to hear reports from the small groups' facilitators. The papers and groups' discussions are presented below.

Employment Services for Haitian Women at HACAD

by

Yoleine Eugene

This presentation deals with the employment problems of Haitian women in Dade County and with the services that HACAD provides and would like to provide to ease these problems. The paper begins with a brief description of the local Haitian community and of HACAD and then focuses on issues of employment.

Approximately 22,000 Haitians reside in the area of Edison-Little River, commonly known as Little Haiti (Demography, Social Status, Housing and Social Needs of the Haitian Population of Edison-Little River, Behavioral Science Research institute, 1983). In addition, clusters of Haitians, totalling 10,000, are currently residing elsewhere in Dade County. According to a HACAD survey of Little Haiti conducted in August 1983 (A Profile of Miami's Little Haiti, HACAD 1983), 51.9 percent of this population is male and 48.01 percent female. About 66 percent, or two thirds, of the population is over 18. People over 65 constitute less than 1 percent of the population.

Looking at a few other figures of interest, nearly 60 percent of the population has had some primary schooling, about 18 percent has had no schooling, and about 22 percent has had some secondary schooling and even post-secondary schooling in about 2 percent of these cases. (Because of the high rate of school attendance among Haitian youths in Miami, these figures will change dramatically in a few years.) Those Haitians who have had a high school education or have specific job skills are least likely to come to HACAD for employment help, although a few of HACAD's clients do belong to this group.

As to employment, 51.3 percent of those surveyed reported that they are unemployed. (We have no breakdown by sex.) Another 11 percent are working on a part-time basis or at temporary jobs. Over 90 percent of those interviewed report that they are looking for work. The average income per person is only $169 a month, and 50 percent earn less than $145 a month. Despite such problems, very few Haitians are receiving public assistance. For example, less than 25 percent receive food stamps.

Finally, the HACAD survey indicates that Haitians are eager to participate in programs that will increase their skills and employability. Over 95 percent would like vocational training; over 90 percent would like assistance in finding a job; over 90 percent would like English training. In fact, clients at HACAD have told the Manpower counselors that they would prefer to forgo present employment in favor of participating in a job training program, as long as they could receive some small stipend.

To summarize, the HACAD survey reveals a young population, largely working age, largely uneducated and unskilled, and largely unemployed or underemployed but eager to become self-reliant. As far as can be determined, few Haitians have given up the job

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quest; few have become permanent welfare recipients; most still cling to the American dream that success comes to those who strive for it, although most do not have the wherewithal to achieve it.

As to sex differences affecting employability in this population, men generally have longer employment histories than women. In Haiti, among the rural peasantry and urban lower class—the social strata best represented by HACAD's clientele—jobs are extremely scarce. Where they exist, men are more likely to obtain them than women. Men labor in farms and factories; they work as handymen or as semiskilled masons, carpenters, mechanics and auto body repairmen. When women work, they do so mostly as small self-employed merchants—entrepreneurs at peasant markets—although a very few do work as sewing machine operators or in places such as electronic assembly or sporting goods factories.

Both men and women are looking for jobs. A woman's marital status (as opposed, say, to the number of children she has) does not appear to affect her determination to find work. Of course, a number of the women are married; others live alone or have spouses in Haiti. Between these two extremes there is an entire continuum of conjugal relations, including the woman who lives by herself with her children and periodically receives visits and money from a "boyfriend" as well as the unmarried woman living with a man in a fairly stable consensual union. Most Haitian women in Miami, whatever their conjugal status, have children to support and not all have men to help them. So they must find employment. And even when a man is in residence, the likelihood is that he too will be unemployed or underemployed. Furthermore, most Haitians not only have themselves and their immediate families to support but also family members in Haiti, who, in many cases, sent these potential wage earners as their representatives to the United States. All of this means that the incentive to work among all Haitian women is strong. There is no indication that husbands resist their wives' efforts to work. Nor, on the level at which employment is to be had, where men's work and women's work are fairly strongly differentiated along established lines and where there is no competitive struggle for advancement, is there much competition for jobs between the sexes. As will be emphasized presently, with the exception of child care, the problems Haitian women face in terms of getting and keeping suitable jobs are largely the same problems that men face. Or, stated another way, the problems of language, education, culture, and prejudice on the part of employers that impede both men's and women's access to jobs are so overwhelming that those problems peculiar to each sex become secondary.

The Haitian American Community Association of Dade County, or HACAD, was, of course, created to deal with the problems of Haitian refugees. HACAD is a professional, human service, not-for-profit organization which assists Haitian immigrants to become self-sufficient members of the community. The Association does this by addressing issues of housing, health care, social welfare, education, and employment. HACAD was started during the last quarter of 1974 by a group of Haitian Americans. It was incorporated in 1975 and remains today the only viable Haitian social agency in Dade County.

HACAD presently operates three major programs: 1) a legal program, begun in February 1982, which focuses on disputes between landlords and tenants but also counsels clients on their legal rights in other areas and represents them in court if necessary; 2) a social service program that provides emergency food, clothing, and shelter as well as translating and interpreting services, escort services, assistance in school registration and in applying for food stamps or welfare; 3) an HRS-funded Manpower Project, which was first implemented in July 1981 and which provides clients with job counseling and job placement services. Periodically, the program has also included ESL and employability skills training components. But because of recent cutbacks in funding, these components have been reduced to a minimum.

Nowadays, clients coming to HACAD in search of employment first stop at HACAD's intake desk and are sent from there to one of HACAD's three Manpower counselors. The counselor opens a file for each of his clients, determines what other social services they may require, and provides them with a general overview of the job market and of the sorts of jobs that are currently available. Counselors interview clients to assess their marketable skills, their English proficiency, and their self-presentation. Counselors then seek to match clients with the jobs that are available or, if no appropriate jobs are available, counselors use their contacts among local employers to develop jobs. Once a counselor sets up an interview for his client, he advises the clients on how best to conduct himself or herself at the interview, on the types of expectations American employers have of their employees, and on some of the rules and regulations pertaining to work in this country. After the scheduled interview, the counselor does a follow-up. If the client has been hired, periodic follow-ups are made to insure that the client has maintained the job and is performing as expected. If the client is not placed in a job, he/she is requested to maintain contact with the counselor until an appropriate position becomes available.

In addition to the Manpower Program, HACAD also operates regular summer youth employment and training programs. This year the program placed 121 young people in jobs subsidized under the Job Training and Partnership Act. It provided them 200 hours of employment and employability skills training. Because most of the adolescents participating in the program are students in the public schools, few long-term placements result from the program, and it will not be considered further in this discussion.

HACAD has never provided any services specific to women. However, of the clients that participate in HACAD's Manpower Program, about two thirds are women. HACAD's Manpower counselors can only speculate as to why so many more women than men require their services. Perhaps Haitian women, who tend to visit HACAD for other social services, including help in obtaining welfare, also look for jobs at the same time. Apparently, also, men often undertake seasonal farm work in places such as Belle Glade and Homestead and leave their women at home to care for the children and to find whatever day work might be available to them. Furthermore, because many women have children to feed and clothe and no man to help them, they can less readily afford to wait for the right job to come along, as some men do. It is, in fact, the impression of the HACAD Manpower counselors that women are more willing to work for less pay than are men.

Finally, although we have no statistical proof, more women may come to HACAD than men because it is easier for HACAD to place women in jobs. Jobs, such as those of hotel maid, housekeeper, live-in domestic, and child-care worker, are more readily offered through HACAD than are the types of unskilled work that men do, such as dishwasher, bus boy, or warehouse worker. Particularly after the recent AIDS scare, Haitian men have had more difficulty finding restaurant and other jobs, and many were fired from the jobs that they did occupy. Of course, occasionally jobs advertised through HACAD for men and women go begging because no one with the requisite language or job skills can be found. In the case of women, jobs, such as cashier, waitress, and sewing machine operator, belong to this category.

Haitian women and men alike confront major obstacles to employment. Lack of education and of appropriate job skills and experience and limited knowledge of English are among these obstacles. Even if a man or woman has mastered sufficient English to conduct day-to-day affairs, he or she is usually unfamiliar with the more specialized vocabularies characteristic of specific jobs.

Haitians also have had little experience with the kinds of bureaucracies they must deal with at larger businesses in order to get and keep a job. They do not know how to fill out application forms. Because Haitians from an early age are taught to respect those in authority, they often do poorly at job interviews. They may avert their eyes from the interviewer and speak only when addressed, answering briefly and indistinctly and asking no questions, even about matters of salary. Again, because of the traditional relationship of Haitians to those in authority and because they do not understand the expectations of American job interviewers, they sometimes create the impression of begging for jobs rather than of "selling themselves," as most American job seekers do.

Although Haitian men and women generally have a reputation in Miami as good workers, they often do not understand the rules and regulations of the work place, particularly those implicit ones that most American workers take for granted. For example, it may strike the latter as common sense to call an employer if one cannot make it to work on time, but it is only common sense in terms of the conventions and etiquette of American culture. Many Haitians are unfamiliar with these conventions.

Employers or potential employers may be unsympathetic to such cultural differences and regard them as personal moral failings on the part of Haitian employees. Some employers or supervisors may also be prejudiced toward Haitians or may simply prefer to hire or work with others of their own ethnic group. Haitians, generally, are unfamiliar with such types of prejudice and discrimination and do not know how to deal with them.

Finally, in addition to all these other problems, Haitians must also contend with problems of transportation. Because many Haitians do not own cars—in fact, do not know how to drive—and because public transportation linking Little Haiti to other sections of Dade County is unreliable and inadequate, residents of the area are frequently limited in terms of where they can seek and maintain jobs. Of course, with sufficient funding, HACAD could begin to rectify this situation by purchasing several vans and providing transportation for people placed in jobs outside regular bus routes, at least until these individuals become sufficiently established that they can provide transportation for themselves.

The problem unique to Haitian women in terms of their finding and keeping jobs is, of course, that of child care. Whether living with a spouse or not, the care of children among Haitians is ultimately the responsibility of the woman. For the most part, women who come to HACAD seeking work find other women willing to look after their children. Some women, particularly older ones, make a business out of caring for others' children, charging weekly fees of $15 to $25 per child. Obviously, a mother of three children who is working part- or full-time at the minimum wage can ill afford such services, much less the woman who is unemployed and seeking work. The women who come to HACAD as clients do manage, however. It is impossible to say how many Haitian women do not come to HACAD or do not seek work because of the problems of finding affordable child care. Nonetheless, although finding child care does not prevent some women from working, the cost of such care is high, and more importantly from the perspective of the child and its development, the quality of care is often poor. The women who look after children are unlicensed and often reside in quarters that are unsuitable to the task. They often do not properly attend to the child's needs or provide it the sort of stimulating environment necessary to its development. What Haitian women and their children need above all, then, are decent, round-the-clock child care facilities. These simply do not exist in the Haitian community. Nor is the funding currently available for HACAD to develop them.

Many of the employment problems that Haitian men and women face can be addressed through the development of effective training programs. A number of clients that come to HACAD have already received some ESL or vocational training elsewhere, but the quality of such training is usually poor. ESL programs are generally too short. The one that HACAD ran last year as part of its now defunct Project Mainstream was only 6 to 8 months in duration. Moreover, few programs are able to teach the more specialized vocabularies required for specific jobs. In evaluating the effectiveness of such programs, recall that a large proportion of HACAD's clientele have never been to school before or have only been there briefly and are illiterate or functionally illiterate even in their own language, let along English, which they speak often with minimal proficiency. Teaching them, for example, how to fill out a job application form requires more than a few months training.

Sometimes women come to HACAD with certificates of proficiency from local vocational schools. They come with certificates as beauticians, medical assistants, or nurse's aides. But they have no real experience and, indeed, no real competency in these areas. They must compete for jobs with others who have high school degrees and who speak more fluent English than they do. In the case of nurse's aides, they must also compete for low-paying jobs with licensed nurses. Others have certificates as sewing machine operators—a job that continues to be available to those with appropriate qualifications. But these certificates mean little for the women have had no on-the-job experience, and once they are placed at a work site, they cannot meet the demands of their employers. For the most part, all such vocational school certification has proven useless for Haitian women, who not only require more comprehensive training programs, including on-the-job training, but programs created specifically to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of Haitians. After all, what good is it to be trained in a job for which one cannot even fill out the application forms?

A training program of the type we contemplate for both men and women should be held during daytime as well as evening hours so that people holding jobs can at the same time get the training necessary to improve themselves. Furthermore, because such a program should aim to socialize individuals to a culture totally different from the one in which they grew up, it is wrong to expect immediate results. The program should be at least one to two years in duration. It should include training in ESL, in the survival skills necessary for day-to-day life, in employment skills, as well as training and experience in specific job areas. In the case of women, HACAD should ideally provide them both jobs as well as child care services while they participate in the program.

There is, regretably, no simple solution to the problems faced by Haitian men and women in Dade County. What is at issue is how to take adults socialized into a world very different from that of most Americans and re-socialize them so that they will survive and prosper in their new country. It is only in the context of such a massive re-socialization effort that the problems specific to each sex can be addressed.

The Haitian Woman: The YWCA Experience

by
Anne-Marie Posse

According to IRS figures, 38,900 Haitian immigrated to South Florida from 1980 to 1982. These entrants included a large number of young adults at the childbearing age. Although this population is about 5 percent of the Dade County population, approximately 20 to 27 percent of all babies born in Jackson Memorial Hospital, the county-operated hospital, are from the Haitian community. (These figures vary, depending on the reporter.) Such a phenomenal birth rate creates a serious handicap in obtaining an education, establishing a vocation, or becoming economically independent. The results of such an extremely high birth rate have a direct effect upon the woman, her family, the local Haitian community, and even the broader community of Dade County. In addition, developing leadership in a group of women burdened with the care of sometimes eight or nine children becomes an almost insurmountable obstacle. The YWCA, whose one imperative is the elimination of racism wherever it exists, is specially sensitive to the needs of the Haitian woman and shares a responsibility in maximizing her potential and in contributing to her community in the form of involvement and leadership.

The YWCA staff believes the needs of the Haitian woman in our society can be summarized as follows:

1. An awareness in the individual woman of her own strengths and development of individual responsibility over her own life.
2. An acquisition of economic independence.
3. A maximization of individual potentials and an ability to provide leadership in her community.

The YWCA began to respond to the need for child care in the Haitian community as early as 1977 when it opened a child care center in the downtown Miami area. The center's director became aware of the Haitians and their problems through a meeting with Phillip Buskirk from the Miami Society of Friends. Mr. Buskirk had been involved in aiding Haitian refugees and encouraged the group from the Miami Society of Friends to provide assistance to the Haitian population. Among the original group of fifty children who entered the program, six were Haitian. As soon as possible, a Haitian teacher was hired in order to facilitate communication for the children. At a later date, an assistant teacher was employed. The increase in Haitian teachers (translators) enabled the parents to participate more in the children's progress and allowed for more involvement in the parent meetings. At present, seven Haitian children attend the center. Their parents pay fees on a sliding scale.

Ms. Posse is a counselor at the YWCA.

In 1982, when funds became available for child care programs to serve entrant children, the YWCA wrote a proposal and received a grant for Cuban/Haitian Entrant children. Although careful planning and study were conducted of the areas where the large population of Haitians resided, the program failed to recruit the necessary number of Haitian children. The maximum number of children who attended never exceeded ten, even though bus transportation was provided and no fees were charged.

In our opinion, the failure of the program in recruiting Haitian children was due to the political climate in Miami at the time. Haitian nationals were being sent to the detention camp and as a result acquired a fear of programs funded by the government.

The downtown center has continued to serve Haitian mothers and children. At present, we care for nine children who pay fees on a sliding scale and seven children subsidized by Title V funds. We do not have the space for all the children requesting enrollment. Our waiting list usually includes approximately fifteen Haitian children.

The YWCA experience is similar to that of the County's Child Development services. They now serve 192 Haitian children and have a waiting list of 188. It is obvious that affordable child care for low income parents is not available in the community. Hence, it is a fact that the Haitian woman will not be able to maximize her potential unless the greater community provides the necessary child care services.

Recognizing the increasing need to help the Haitian woman, the YWCA submitted a proposal to South Florida Employment and Training Consortium for Department of Human Resource Services (DHRS) funding that would serve the Haitian woman by providing ESL classes, employability skills, vocational training and employment. The Entrant Women's Transition Program (EWTP) was formed when funds were awarded in two consecutive years (FY 82-83 and FY 83-84) to the YWCA. Throughout the program's duration, the staff encountered an overwhelming set of obstacles hindering the Haitian woman, such as financial hardship, cultural barriers, medical and psychological problems, and occasional family violence. The staff also became increasingly aware that the participants were surviving under poverty conditions which adversely affected their performance in the program. Difficulties in attaining child/infant care also caused poor attendance in many cases. Our staff considered this to be the main obstacle in their progress. During the first year of EWTP, Child Development Services provided minimal slots for child care. Some Title V monies were allocated to certain centers in order to create additional space for Haitian/Cuban entrants, but the need continued to outweigh the response. During the first one and a half years of EWTP's operation, only one Cuban woman was able to attain child care for her two children at Lincoln Marti; none of the Haitians were provided with child care services. In January of 1984, Child Development Services received more funding from DHRS and was finally able to place the children of eight Haitian EWTP participants. These eight participants remained with Child Development until June 1984, at which time the YWCA's contract ended. Upon termination of the EWTP, the participants' child care services stopped. Despite their newly acquired training, they were unable successfully to attain and/or sometimes maintain employment because child care costs consumed minimum-wage salaries.

Overall, the Haitian woman is extremely concerned for the welfare of her family. Medical and legal problems centered on the children and the frequency of their births.

The YWCA-EWTP staff of instructor-counselors was forced to assume the role of social workers. More than half of their time went to helping the participants obtain food, clothing, shelter, rent money, legal information and medical services (the participants often got lost in Jackson Memorial's bureaucratic shuffle). All of the participants had a legal status, but some of their children were illegal. The situation made them very hard to serve, especially in helping them apply for public assistance; some were simply not eligible. Also, if the children did not have a legal status, they were not permitted into the public school system. The EWTP staff went beyond its professional responsibilities and program requirements. The staff became advocates for the participants, responding to their most basic needs for survival.

In order better to serve the Haitian women, the EWTP staff recognized the need to understand their cultural background. From daily contact with Haitian women, the staff discovered that the Haitian people have a history of being victimized by their own people in Haiti. The social class system in Haiti is very pronounced, hence resulting in mistrust and anger of the poor class toward those with better economic or educational levels. Unlike the Cubans, who have a strong support system in Miami, Haitians do not enjoy that kind of help. The EWTP staff has seen some participants refusing to work for another Haitian due to fear that they would encounter verbal or economic abuse. This was an unfortunate situation since some of the participants were illiterate and working for another Haitian was their only chance for employment.

The YWCA-EWTP staff observed the following characteristics to be the obstacles as well as the driving force in Haitian women's struggles. They are generous, nurturing, and gentle unless intruded upon by others in personal areas such as family, social status, educational level or belief system. Sometimes, their pride was transformed into arrogance or defiance if they felt threatened or intimidated. They showed an unusually hungry desire to learn, but due to their shy nature, this was translated into ignorance or apathy. The EWTP staff can best describe the Haitian women as outwardly passive and submissive. We believe this to be a direct result of their cultural upbringing. However, the American personality is best described as active and independent, and this creates the major difficulties in their acculturation process. In a period of two years the EWTP served 68 Haitian women and during FY 83-84 served 43 women, provided employment skills, training, and ESL to 33, and placed 24 in jobs.

In summary, the Haitian woman has many obstacles to overcome before she can completely integrate into our society. Among these are child care, family planning, cultural and language barriers, economic deprivation, and educational deficiencies. The government has attempted to alleviate some of these obstacles through special monies allocated to community-based organizations and the public school system. Although many were served, the limitations imposed, the lack of sufficient child/infant care, and the inefficiency of the local service agencies in grasping the basic needs of this population made the task difficult and frustrating indeed.

There is a need for an efficient and cohesive networking system among service providers that would facilitate direct service to the Haitian woman. We encourage further study of this problem and will cooperate in any means possible towards the continued education and guidance of the Haitian woman striving for emotional well being and economic stability.

Education and the Haitian Immigrant Woman

by

Jocelyn LeGrand and Nora Hernandez Murrell

In 1972, a small boat loaded with Haitian immigrants reached the shores of South Florida. This was only the beginning of a more massive and spectacular exodus of Haitians arriving in the United States in search of a better life.

At first, the typical Haitian refugee was a young male. But as time passed, an increasing number of women followed the steps of their male counterparts. It is estimated that now Haitian women outnumber Haitian men in South Florida.

In today's dialogue, we are going to discuss Miami-Dade Community College's involvement in education and training programs for Haitian immigrant women who have entered this country since 1979.

The mass of Haitian immigrant women who reached our shores on small boats had to face a diversity of problems and human needs as soon as they arrived here. First of all, they had to overcome the language barrier. They could not communicate in English and spoke a language completely foreign to the American people. They also experienced culture shock. The Haitian women immigrants' life style, customs, and traditions were, to a large extent, incompatible with the American way of life. Furthermore, the majority of these women lacked education and vocational skills to function in the new society. Last, but not least, they had to face unemployment and difficulty in meeting basic needs such as shelter, food and social services.

Since the very first moment of the spectacular influx of Haitians in South Florida in 1979, Miami-Dade Community College began responding to the needs of these new immigrants. In fact, in 1979 Miami-Dade Community College extended its outreach centers to serve the Haitian population. The College offered English as a second language classes at Edison Community School located within Miami's Haitian community. The College also offered acculturation classes to detainees awaiting release.

What has been the situtation of the Haitian women immigrants from 1979 to the present? Before we address this issue, we need to recall some basic characteristics of this population.

Socio-economic Origin: Haitian women immigrants are predominantly from the northern and northwestern regions of Haiti. The majority come from rural areas. Only a small number come from large towns or from the capitol, Port-Au-Prince.

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Education: In Haiti, only the middle and upper classes have access to good formal education. Consequently more than 50 percent of Haitian women immigrants are illiterate or semi-literate. About 30 percent attended secondary schools in Haiti, but are not high school graduates. Only a small number have completed their secondary education or attended a university.

Family Status: The majority of Haitian women immigrants are mothers and often single parents. Some of them have children to support both in Haiti and in the United States. Only the more educated Haitian women are likely to be single with no children or married living with a husband.

Employment: A large number of Haitian women are unemployed for reasons other than their own choosing. Those who work are usually in jobs which offer little security, such as in hotels, restaurants and domestic work. Also, many Haitian women are farm workers receiving sub-minimum wages.

Age: The majority of Haitian women immigrants entered the United States when they were 16 to 35 years of age.

Haitian women immigrants, as a subgroup, not only face the problems common to all Haitian immigrants, but are generally in an underprivileged situation in comparison to their male counterparts'. In rural Haiti women are less likely to be educated than men. Women more than men have to bear the responsibility of raising children and caring for the elderly and other relatives. In addition, Haitian women tend to be reserved and non-assertive, and suffer from higher unemployment than Haitian men. Finally, Haitian women immigrants also have to deal with the problems common to all women living in America such as teen-age pregnancy, sexual abuse, societal sexism, and discrimination at work.

Soon after their arrival in the United States, many Haitian women immigrants realized that EDUCATION was the key to their futures; thus they became highly motivated to learn. Places of learning became centers for socializing and cultural activities as well. But in their search for education they met a quagmire of problems.

Haitian women often had to bring their children to class due to lack of child care opportunities. Also, some had to walk long distances to get to class sites because of an inability to pay for public transportation.

In addition, many pre-literate Haitian women found themselves in a classroom environment for the first time in their lives. This made it difficult for them to adjust to the routine and discipline necessary for success in a structured educational program.

And finally, there is cultural pressure on the Haitian woman to continue carrying the full responsibility of managing the home and children, regardless of her activities outside the home. The consequences of this for the Haitian woman seeking additional education are a lack of understanding and cooperation from her husband, a tremendously over-loaded schedule, and the stress that results from both of these factors. There are many cases in which female students had to get up at 4:00 a.m. to get their chores done before coming to 8:00 a.m. classes.

From 1979 to the present, Miami-Dade Community College has been constantly providing the kind of institutional assistance that Haitian women immigrants have needed. Various grant programs were developed. The Haitian Training program at North Campus from 1979 to 1981 offered English as a second language and acculturation courses, as well as job placement services. Project BEST at the Mitchell Wolfson New World Center Campus offered classes in English as a second language and employability skills. In 1981 Project HELP, a major grant project funded by the Department of Education, was implemented to assist Haitian and Cuban entrants. Classes were held mornings, afternoons, and evenings. Two of the three Project HELP centers were located within the Haitian comunity: one in Little Haiti and the other in Homestead where a large number of Haitian women farm workers live.

The instructional component of Project HELP included three levels of English as a second language, employability skills, and literacy for illiterate and semi-literate persons. The students received all textbooks and instructional resources needed at no charge. In addition, they had full access to audio-visual facilities. Students who needed individual attention were provided with tutorial services beyond regular class hours.

The counseling component of Project HELP included 1) group counseling to address the problem of acculturation, 2) regular individual counseling to assess the needs of each individual student and to intervene accordingly, and 3) job placement services for the participants. The project also provided the student with free transportation and free child care services.

When the student completed the third level of English as a second language, she was referred to training programs or higher education institutions, depending on her need, ability and interest. Among the participants in this room today, many are former Miami-Dade Community College Haitian women students who transferred to vocational training programs for dressmakers, nurse's aides, and clerk-typists, or who entered the College as regular degree-seeking students.

Project HELP was extended until December 1982. From September 1982 to July 1984, Project HELP II and Project HELP III at Miami-Dade Community College continued to offer Haitian women education, vocational training and support services. HELP II and III were funded by the South Florida Employment and Training Consortium (SFETC). Besides English as a second language, these programs also included vocational training in food preparation, clerical and receptionist skills, and typing. Classes were held in Little Haiti and here at the Mitchell Wolfson New World Center Campus. Approximately 375 Haitian students were served, of which 85 percent were female.

Currently, two small grant programs at the College serve Haitian women immigrants. Project HELP/STIP offers employability skills to participants who are placed in on-the-job training by community-based organizations. ESL I-II-III offers English as a second language to its participants. Approximately 85 percent of the participants are Haitian women immigrants.

Each summer (1983-1984) the College has organized CETA-funded summer programs (Project Smart) for young adults aged 16 to 21. These programs also offered English as a second language, employability skills, support services, and part-time employment to Haitian women immigrants.

Besides the grant program, Miami-Dade Community College has been offering educational opportunities to large numbers of Haitian women immigrants through its regular programs of the College. Haitian women immigrants attend the Language Institutes for credit courses in English as a second language. Others are enrolled in various programs leading to Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degrees at all four campuses. Finally, many Haitian women are taking continuing education courses to improve their life skills and occupational skills.

Problems and Recommendations

The College has played an important role in helping Haitian women immigrants meet their educational goals. As a result, a large number of Haitian women immigrants have acquired the skills needed to become economically self-sufficient in the United States. But our work is not yet finished.

There still are thousands of Haitian women immigrants who need the type of education and support services that others have received. Particularly, there are many motivated Haitian women who are now seeking vocational training in fields that can potentially make them self-sufficient.

In order to achieve educational progress, Haitian women need:

1. child care,
2. transportation,
3. medical services,
4. economic services,
5. large-scale vocational training programs in outreach centers, and
6. a Haitian Student Center here at the Mitchell Wolfson New World Center Campus. This center would offer special counseling to Haitian students individually and in groups, and would organize tutorial services especially for Haitian students in an effort to impact positively on the attrition rate among Haitian women students. The center would also collect and disseminate information on Haitian students who have achieved academic excellence. Special attention would be given to Haitian women's achievements. An additional function of the Center would be to sponsor workshops and short-term presentations for educators within Dade County for the purpose of improving their understanding of Haitian history and culture, thereby sensitizing them to the needs and characteristics of their Haitian students.

Dialogue Proceedings

The situation and needs of Haitian entrant women were viewed from three perspectives: social services, education, and employment and training. Each of the three discussion groups addressed one of these issues. Their analyses of problems and solutions follows.

Social Services

The group which considered social services devoted much of its effort to the child care problem, as might be predicted. They began with the "bottom line": if child care is not available, then the women will not be able to work or participate in the training classes that many of them need to become job-ready.[18] Also, they need child care for the time they spend in the intake process required for participating in training or social services, a task that can consume one or two weeks. Furthermore, they need someone to watch their children when they look for jobs, go to social service agencies, or shop; they need access to drop-in facilities in order to fulfill these responsibilities. The need is clear, and the answer seems to be money—funds to set up facilities and prepare homes to be used as child care centers.

Another need identified by the small group was dissemination of information about nutrition and topics such as sterilization. Workshops were recommended for this purpose. Of course, good translators must be available, or the effort is wasted. A related example is how family planning information is given at the local hospital. The use of birth control pills, for instance, is explained, but often not well enough in Creole for the women to know how to use the pills correctly.

Discussants noted that although many of the needed social services do in fact exist, providers in agencies do not always know what is available, and obviously they cannot make appropriate referrals. Thus, they suggested setting up a mechanism that would allow each agency to learn what other agencies provide and developing a referral system.

Agencies serving Haitian women should also have the opportunity to learn more about the women's needs. One feasible solution is having educational dialogues, such as this one. Furthermore, the educational opportunities that can result in having agencies improve their existing programs might also cause other agencies to begin to provide services. In this way, the situation of the 2,500 Haitians in the Southwest Dade-Homestead area, where social services are not available, could be changed for the better.

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[18] The responsibilities of Haitian women as caretakers and as economic providers are thoroughly described in the papers presented above and will not be reiterated here. In general, the section on the dialogue proceedings will try to avoid redundancy by not restating problems articulated in the papers.

In addition to recommending that services be expanded and improved, the group suggested consolidating the intake services. The Haitian women have neither the time nor the money to "go all over town." Having one intake center seems like a feasible proposal.

Even if all of the recommendations stated above were acted upon, one serious problem would remain: the ambiguous legal status of Haitians. Developing the best service system in the country means nothing if many Haitians are denied access to it because of their unclear or illegal status. Accordingly, the group called for action on this matter.

Finally, the group recommended a future conference and a task force to address the problems and solutions identified during this dialogue.

Education

The legal-status issue that can keep Haitian women from receiving assistance from social service agencies also has a negative impact on their educational opportunities at Miami-Dade Community College. Only women with clear legal statuses can enroll in degree-seeking programs or, because of federal regulations, receive financial aid. The group which discussed this problem and other obstacles to Haitian women's education gave an immediate response by endorsing a letter which calls for legislation that would allow entrants to adjust their status to permanent resident alien. Not only does the lack of a clear legal status keep Haitians from receiving some needed services, it locks them out of the political process. Their voices, their votes, must be heard by people who frame policies.

Another impediment to many women's education is that, having never been in school before, they feel uncomfortable in classes. Their fear, insecurity, and lack of confidence interfere with their learning process. Recommended were special classes for pre-literate persons that are held off-campus; in this way, their feelings of inadequacy and embarrassment can be minimized.

Providing the appropriate classes is necessary but not sufficient, for without child care and transportation, the women cannot attend any classes. In addition to providing these support services, there could be workshops for Haitian men to make them sensitive to the necessity of their sharing household responsibilities, including child care. Granted, Haitian men face most of the same barriers and problems confronting Haitian women, but the women have additional responsibilities which further complicate their situation. Educating their men seems a reasonable solution.

Given the crucial role language plays in the women's finding employment, the group's cluster of recommendations in this area is not surprising. They recommend the women be taught regular ESL first for meeting their basic survival needs and then vocational ESL, the occupation-specific language skills. The closer the woman is to employment in other respects, the sooner she needs to learn the vocabulary of her intended vocation. Another language issue concerned the instruction of pre-literate persons. Whether they should be made literate in Creole first, or be taught English first, or be introduced to both simultaneously was debated by the group. Given the extent of this problem—that is, the number of pre-literate aliens in America—the subject deserves further study by linguists and teachers. The third recommendation concerned persons who already have a trade or profession. To get them into the labor force in a timely manner, they should receive instruction in the vocation-specific language they need. Their general English proficiency can be improved after their immediate need is met.

For persons who have a trade or profession not directly transferable to the local economy, there should be vocational programs in the American vocations closest to theirs.

The discussants described two features that would strengthen any program. First, virtually all Haitians, regardless of their past education or training, need to master employability skills for working effectively with their employers, co-workers, and customers. These skills should be a standard component of programs. Second, the staff should include Haitians as instructors or aides. Instructors who are not Haitian should be knowledgeable about and sensitive to Haitians.

Finally, the group called for ongoing dialogues on Haitian issues to be held throughout the community.

Employment and Training

The group whose task it was to analyze the Haitian women's situation relative to employment and training identified several concerns. First, an obvious barrier, one which is discussed above, is the women's lack of education. Although a woman may possess marketable job skills, her educational level may nullify this strength if she lacks the education required for filling out a job application. It used to be that applications could be taken home, but the trend now is to have applicants complete the forms on the spot, thus eliminating the uneducated woman from the job competition. In short, training skills in isolation are not enough.

As for vocational training, there also some obstacles exist, problems inherent in the structure of the Job Training Partnership Act and the programs it authorizes. Before these problems are described, it should be explained that the discussion group analyzed the programs as they are currently operated, not as they supposedly could be designed. Therefore, the following passage should be understood as an example of how the Act is being implemented.

The major problem is that it is difficult to serve the neediest clients. In a six-month program, there is not enough time for someone to become literate in Creole and English and develop vocational skills and employability skills. One project which last year had offered ESL, vocational training, and on-the-job training lost money due to the system of paying providers upon placement of clients. Teaching ESL is a costly and time-consuming proposition. This year the project offers only on-the-job training.

Another program underlines the problem with time constraints. The program is supposed to teach vocational ESL and employability skills in one month. Is this plan a realistic route to helping Haitians achieve long-term self-sufficiency?

Another problem is the lack of funds to use as stipends for students who need the financial incentive and support to participate in training. For people who have barely the resources to survive, the cost of transportation to attend classes can prove an insurmountable obstacle.

The Job Training Partnership Act programs will not be altered until the influential private industry council is made sensitive to the plight and potential of Haitians. Unfortunately, there is not even one Haitian on the council for the areas where Haitians are concentrated. Nor have mutual assistance associations emerged to advocate for programs appropriate for Haitians. The decision-makers must be educated. Until then, the programs cannot be improved.

Improved programs must include lessons on American culture. Based on the Haitian's experience, for instance, there are several logical reasons that a Haitian would not think to call his employer if he cannot get to work, but the employer does not know or care about the Haitian's background. All he knows is that his employee did not come to work. Haitian workers must be oriented to the American system in order to obtain and keep employment. Also, if employers were educated about Haitian culture, they would not be so quick to dismiss Haitians as lazy or unreliable.

Another barrier to Haitians' employment is their religion. Seventh Day Adventists cannot work on Saturday, the very day they are most needed in such likely places of employment as hotels. How this problem can be resolved is unclear.

However, other employer-related problems can have concrete solutions, for there are already laws that protect employees. Some employers exploit Haitians, who are willing to work for below-minimum wages, especially if they are undocumented. Also reported are incidents of employers not paying time-and-a-half for overtime and making minimum-wage workers pay for their own uniforms. Furthermore, because Haitians are willing to work long hours at hard work and not complain, some employers have responded by giving the harder jobs to Haitians.

Discrimination is yet another problem. The darker the person's skin, the more racism he will encounter. Also, some employers discriminate against all Haitians because they fear they are AIDS victims.

Of course, not all obstacles to Haitians' employment stem from the pernicious nature of some employers. Sometimes it is simply a case of unthinking sex-role stereotyping. For example, women are not considered as candidates for the many jobs in nurseries (urban gardening), but they can do the job. Educating employers is the key to gaining access to the available jobs.

Finally, the legal status of Haitians must be resolved. At this point, the Haitian community is powerless, especially in comparison with the Cuban community and Cuban entrants. Legal status and voting rights could help alter this situation. Clear legal status would mean training opportunities for persons now presently excluded from programs. It would mean better employment opportunities and employers who could not exploit their workers with vague threats about legal actions. The obvious recommendation: pass legislation authorizing Haitians' status adjustment to permanent resident alien.

Chapter 3

HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS

Gross Population Profile

Majority are Mexican

In 1980, most Hispanic immigrants, including both new arrivals and persons adjusting their status from nonimmigrant to immigrant, were from Mexico.[1] In fact, out of the year's total of 530,635, Mexicans accounted for over 10 percent: 56,680. A slight preponderance of this number was persons exempt from numerical limitations, and 50,000 were new arrivals. Second to Mexicans were South Americans: 39,717 persons, of whom nearly 29,000 were new arrivals. Also, 11,172 of South American immigrants were exempt from numerical limitations. Finally, Central Americans accounted for nearly 21,000 immigrants, about half of these being new arrivals and one third, exempt from numerical limitations.[2]

1979 Data on Age and Sex Distribution

The latest data from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) that are disaggregated by gender are for FY 1979. Data processing problems in later years resulted in incomplete information; consequently, tabulations routinely published including several variables, one of which is sex, are not available for more recent years. Thus, 1979 figures will have to suffice.

Table 3.01 presents the age and sex distributions of Hispanic immigrants in FY 1979. The Mexican population was the youngest of the three, but all three were youthful in that nearly 90 percent were below age 40. The child population was actually a bit low compared to that expected from the fertility of the sending nations. However, this phenomenon is understandable considering the relatively few immigrants in the late stages of childbearing, as well as the fact that many immigrants entered as unmarried relatives (and, therefore, probably as persons who were not parents).

Overall, there were more women than men: 52,712 compared to 51,218. In the prime working ages, 20 to 29 and 30 to 39, there were slightly more men than women. Among Mexicans only, men in these age ranges outnumbered their female counterparts, approximately 14,000 to 10,000. However, in the smaller groups of Central and South Americans, there were more women than men in these age ranges.

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[1] For a definition of "immigrant" and related terms and regulations, please see Appendix A.

[2] Immigration and Naturalization Service, *1980 Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*, U.S. Department of Justice (Washington: 1981), Table 6.

Destination: California

Because "state and area of intended residence" data are among the tabulations not available in the latest INS yearbooks, we will use INS Alien Registration data to estimate the new arrivals' residence patterns. These data, which are accurate to the extent that new arrivals' patterns resemble those of their permanent resident counterparts', are shown in Table 3.02. California was home to a majority (62 percent) of Hispanics as a whole. It was the most popular state for Mexicans and for Central Americans and the second most popular state for South Americans. New York was the first choice of South Americans and the second of Central Americans. Finally, Texas received the greatest numbers of Mexicans, second only to California.

Selected Demographic, Socioeconomic Characteristics

Marital Status, Fertility Rate, and Household Composition: Vague Picture of Hispanic Immigrants

It is difficult to develop a portrait of the latest wave of female Hispanic immigrants. For example, their marital status is virtually a mystery. The most recent figures on the marital status of immigrants pre-date this wave, and they themselves are not even broken down by country of origin.

A measure of their fertility is possible, but only by assuming that it resembles that of all persons of Hispanic origin. In Chapter 2, Tables 2.08 and 2.09 report on fertility rates and birth orders, respectively. Hispanics as a group have a relatively high fertility rate, and Mexicans lead all other groups in this respect. For all groups, taken together as well as individually, women in the age range 20 to 29 have the greatest percentage of births.

The percent distribution of live births by birth order reveals that most births are of first or second order. Relatively few births are fourth order or higher.

Finally, in 1982 the National Commission for Employment Policy reported on the number of female heads of household. As Figure 3.01 illustrates, the percent of families headed by females was highest among Puerto Ricans and blacks, and since 1974, the Puerto Rican family has been more likely than the black family to be headed by a woman. For all other groups, there has been a gradual rise in the percent of female-headed families, but it has remained below 20 percent, which is higher than the figure for white non-Hispanic families.

Foreign-Born Hispanics: Less Education, Less English Used than American-Born Counterparts

Again, the lack of data on recent Hispanic immigrants hinders efforts to evaluate their socioeconomic status. In this case, the data available on Hispanics' levels of education come from the National Commission for Employment Policy. Table 3.03 presents the average years of schooling completed by native and nonnative Hispanics. In almost every group, foreign-born Hispanics had fewer years of schooling than native Hispanics, but both groups had less education than White non-Hispanic persons. Furthermore, there is an inverse correlation with age.

The Commission also reported on English language usage, classifying households as "English only," "English dominant," "Spanish only" and "Spanish dominant." (See Table 3.04.) The difference in usage between the native and nonnative Hispanics households is striking. For all Hispanics, about 32 percent of the American-born had English-only homes; the comparable figure for nonnative Hispanics was 9 percent. Predictably, the reverse was true for Spanish-only homes: about 4 percent of native household and 29 percent of nonnative households. A comparison of the distribution patterns for groups reveals "other" Hispanics--presumably Central and South Americans--to have had more English-only homes and fewer Spanish-only homes than Mexicans. In all, the percentage of households that were Spanish-dominant or Spanish-only was high, accounting for about two thirds of all nonnative households.

Labor Force/Economic Characteristics

White Collar Clericals and Blue Collar Operatives

In Table 3.05 the percent distribution of occupations of Hispanic women is presented. The greatest proportion of these women, who were not necessarily immigrants, had white collar jobs, mainly as clerical and kindred workers. Of all the blue collar workers, most were operatives or service workers. The distribution pattern for the groups did not vary significantly. Women of Mexican background ranked lowest in proportion of white collar workers and proportions of professional and clerical workers. Puerto Ricans ranked highest in white collar jobs and were closest to the pattern for white women.

Wages and Income: Mexicans the Lowest

As Table 3.06 indicates, Mexican women (not just immigrants) earned less per hour and per year than other groups. The highest hourly wage was earned by Cubans, and the highest annual income, by Central and South Americans. Whites, however, still earned per hour and per year more than Hispanics as a whole and more than any Hispanic group.

TABLE 3.01

Percent Distribution of Hispanic Immigrants, by Nationality, Age, and Sex: FY 1979

	Nationality											
	Mexico				Central America[a]				South America			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
Age	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-4	2,283	8.2	2,040	8.4	480	6.9	526	5.5	1,289	7.8	1,241	6.6
5-9	2,481	8.9	2,424	10.0	654	9.4	682	7.1	1,290	7.8	1,274	6.8
10-19	6,579	23.7	6,114	25.2	1,864	26.8	1,947	20.4	3,504	21.2	3,475	18.4
20-29	9,859	35.5	6,339	26.1	2,087	30.0	3,124	32.7	4,637	28.1	5,368	28.4
30-39	4,268	15.4	3,885	16.0	1,077	15.5	1,729	18.1	3,366	20.4	3,947	20.9
40-49	1,329	4.8	1,850	7.6	385	5.5	769	8.0	1,338	8.1	1,714	9.1
50-59	596	2.1	989	4.1	217	3.1	441	4.6	606	3.7	975	5.2
60+	398	1.4	662	2.7	173	2.5	329	3.4	452	2.7	868	4.6
TOTAL[b]	27,793	100.0	24,303	100.0	6,943	100.0	9,547	100.0	16,482	100.0	18,862	100.0

[a] Includes Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

[b] Totals may not equal 100.0 due to rounding.

Source: Compiled and calculated from Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1979 Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Department of Justice (Washington: 1980), Table 9.

TABLE 3.02

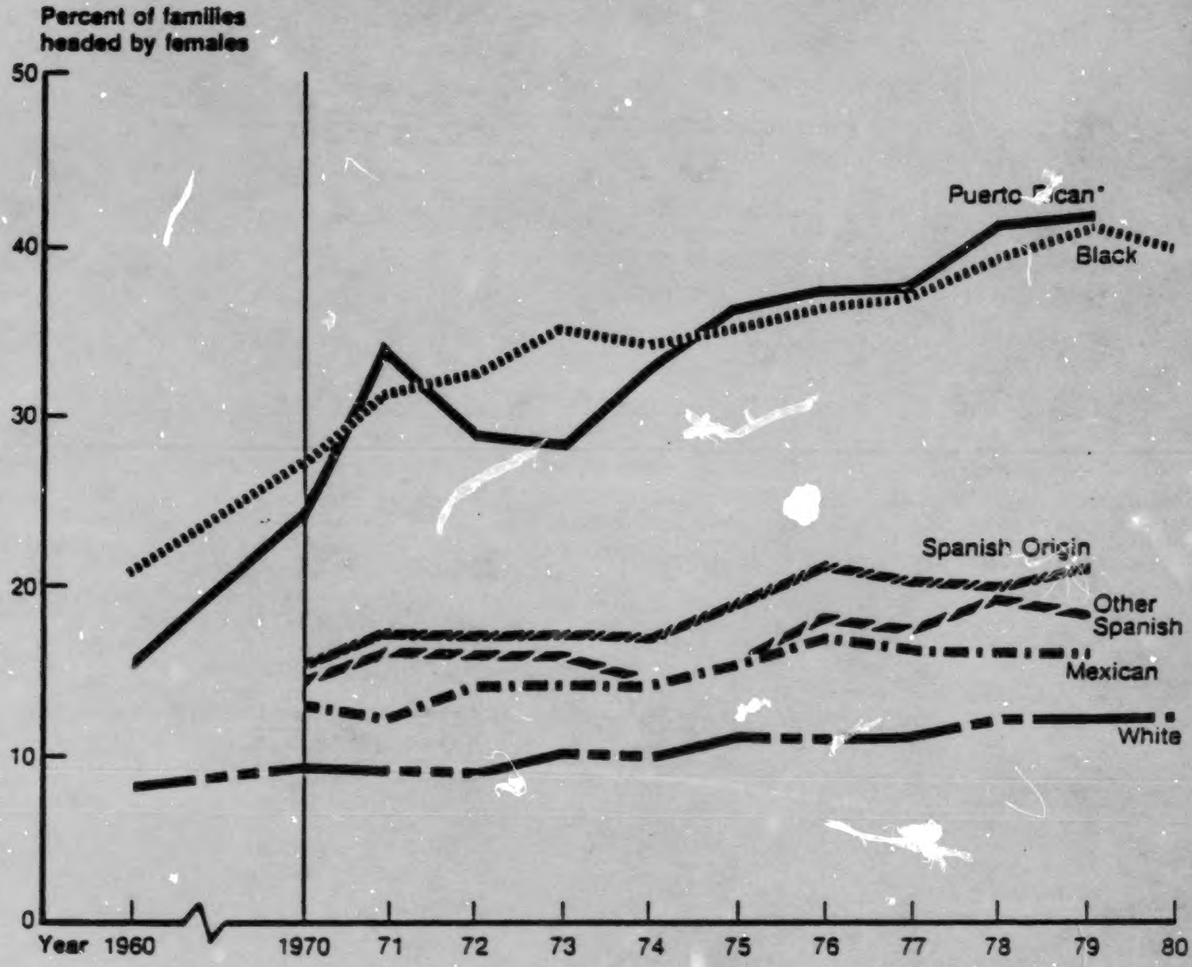
Permanent Resident Aliens, by Selected States of Residence and Nationality: 1980

States	Nationality					
	Mexico		Central America		South America	
	No.	% Dist.	No.	% Dist.	No.	% Dist.
Arizona	40,611	4.1	455	0.4	820	0.3
California	519,782	52.4	55,404	44.1	41,399	16.2
Florida	5,556	0.6	8,360	6.6	26,109	10.2
Illinois	69,959	7.0	5,461	4.3	9,701	3.8
New Jersey	995	0.1	5,468	4.4	34,285	13.4
New York	3,638	0.4	24,052	19.2	92,629	36.2
Texas	288,595	29.1	3,802	3.0	7,132	2.8
TOTAL	992,765	100.00	125,591	100.0	255,829	100.0

Source: Compiled and calculated from Immigration and Naturalization Service, *1980 Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*, U.S. Department of Justice (Washington: 1981), Table 18.

FIGURE 3.01

Percent of Female-headed Families, by Race and Type of Spanish Origin: 1960-1980



*In 1960 Puerto Ricans are identified on the basis of birth or parentage.

Source: Reproduced in National Commission for Employment Policy, Hispanics and Jobs: Barriers to Progress, Report No. 14 (Washington: September 1982), Diagram 1.

TABLE 3.03

Average Years of Schooling Completed by White Non-Hispanics and Hispanics, by Age and Birthplace: 1976

Age and Nativity	Group				
	White Non-Hispanic	Mexican-American	Puerto Rican[a]	Cuban-American	Other Hispanic
22-30	13.2	10.8	10.4	12.3	12.2
Native	13.2	11.5	12.0	14.3	12.6
Nonnative	12.9	8.4	10.0	12.2	11.5
31-50	12.5	9.0	8.7	11.2	11.1
Native	12.5	9.7	11.5	12.8	11.1
Nonnative	11.9	6.7	8.2	11.2	11.1
51 +	10.7	5.8	6.3	9.1	8.6
Native	10.9	6.1	6.3	7.9	8.6
Nonnative	9.1	5.1	6.3	9.1	8.7

[a] Island-born Puerto Ricans are defined as nonnative.

Source: Reproduced in National Commission for Employment Policy, Hispanics and Jobs: Barriers to Progress, Report No. 14 (Washington: September 1982), Table 4.

TABLE 3.04

Distribution of Hispanics, Age 22-51, by English-Language Usage and Place of Birth: 1976[a]

Place of Birth	Total Percent	English Only	English Dominant	Spanish Dominant	Spanish Only
Total Hispanic					
Total	100.0	23.1	34.5	28.5	14.0
U.S. Native	100.0	32.2	42.1	21.3	4.4
Nonnative	100.0	9.0	22.7	39.6	28.8
Mexican-American					
Total	100.0	20.9	40.1	26.0	13.0
U.S. Native	100.0	26.2	46.3	22.3	5.1
Nonnative	100.0	6.1	22.6	36.1	35.1
Puerto Rican					
Total	100.0	13.8	27.1	40.8	18.3
U.S. Native	100.0	50.7	28.9	19.1	1.3
Nonnative[b]	100.0	6.3	26.8	45.2	21.7
Cuban-Americans					
Total	100.1	6.4	13.6	47.4	32.6
U.S. Native	100.0	50.0	25.0	18.8	6.3
Nonnative	100.0	4.8	13.2	48.5	33.5
Other Hispanic Origin					
Total	100.0	35.7	30.6	24.0	9.8
U.S. Native	100.0	44.2	33.8	19.1	3.0
Nonnative	100.0	19.3	24.5	33.4	22.9

[a] "English only" includes persons whose usual household language is English and speak no other language in the home; "Spanish only" is defined in a similar fashion. English-dominant persons include those whose usual household language is English and also often use Spanish; Spanish-dominant persons include those whose usual household language is Spanish and often use English.

[b] Puerto Ricans born on the island are termed here "nonnative."

Source: Reproduced in National Commission for Employment Policy, Hispanics and Jobs: Barriers to Progress, Report No. 14 (Washington: September 1982), Table 5.

TABLE 3.05

Occupational Distribution of Employed Women, by Race and Ethnicity: 1979

	White	Black	Total His-panic	Mexi-can	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Other
White Collar	65.5	47.1	48.2	46.1	56.6	46.7	50.8
Professional Technical and Kindred Workers	15.9	13.8	7.5	6.4	10.4	6.5	9.6
Managers and Administrators, excl. Farm	6.5	2.9	3.7	3.5	4.2	2.4	4.4
Sales	7.4	3.1	5.3	5.1	3.6	6.6	6.2
Clerical and Kindred Workers	35.7	27.2	31.7	31.1	38.4	31.2	30.6
Blue Collar	14.3	18.6	28.4	28.1	26.4	41.9	24.8
Craft and Kindred Workers	1.9	1.3	2.1	1.8	2.2	3.9	2.3
Operatives	11.2	15.8	25.2	25.0	23.4	36.8	21.7
Laborers excl. Farm	1.2	1.4	1.1	1.3	0.8	1.2	0.8
Farmers and Farm Managers	1.4	0.9	-	-	-	-	-
Farm Laborers and Supervisors	-	-	1.5	2.4	0.9	-	-
Service Workers	18.8	33.4	21.8	23.4	16.1	11.4	24.5
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number Employed (Thousands)	33,943	4,938	1,677	962	173	152	390

Source: National Commission for Employment Policy, Hispanics and Jobs: Barriers to Progress, Report No. 14 (Washington: September 1982), Table 7.

TABLE 3.06

Average Hourly Wage and Median Annual Income of Women, by Race and Hispanic Group

Race and Hispanic Group	Average Hourly Wage, 1975[a]	Median Annual Income, 1978[b]
Total Hispanic	$3.03	$3,788
Mexican-American	2.88	3,415
Puerto Rican	3.36	4,050
Cuban-American	3.47	4,052
Central/South American	3.31	5,086
Other Spanish	3.04	4,285
White	3.67	4,117
Black	3.46	3,707

[a] Women 14 years or older, working for a wage or salary.

[b] Women 14 years or older who had an income.

Source: National Commission for Employment Policy, Hispanics and Jobs: Barriers to Progress, Report No. 14 (Washington: September 1982), Table 9.

New Directions

Texas Southmost College
September 21, 1984

What is the situation of Hispanic immigrant women? Are they employed, and if not, why not? These and other questions were the focus of the New Directions Conference. Hispanic immigrant women and representatives from business, government, social service agencies, the state employment commission and department of human resources, and education all met to discuss the circumstances of Hispanic women and to recommend policies and programs that can help them become economically self-sufficient.

The dialogue began with the presentation of papers and respondents' remarks. Then, everyone moved into small groups to offer their thoughts on the issues at hand. One of these group sessions was conducted in Spanish only, and the others were in English. In the afternoon, everyone met in a large group for further discussion, which was facilitated by an "official" translator and the many bilingual participants.

Out of the day-long dialogue came clear statements of need as well as recommendations. The papers which initiated the dialogue and the resulting discussions are presented below.

The Immigrant Women—A Poignant Scorn

Paula S. Gomez

I begin today with the poet Wordsworth's conception of America:

> Long-wished-for sight, the Western World appears;
> And when the ship was moored, I leaped ashore
> Indignantly, - resolved to be a man,
> Who, having o'er the past no power, would live
> No longer in subjection to the past,
> With abject mind - from a tyrannic lord
> Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured.
> So, like a fugitive whose feet have cleared
> Some boundary which his followers may not cross
> In prosecution of their deadly chase,
> Respiring, I looked round. How bright the sun,
> The breeze how soft! Can anything produced
> In the Old World compare, thought I, for power
> And majesty, with this tremendous stream
> Sprung from the desert? And behold a city
> Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! . . .
> Sooth to say,
> On nearer view, a motley spectacle
> Appeared, of high pretensions - unreproved
> But by the obstreperous voice of higher still;
> Big passions strutting on a petty stage,
> Which a detached spectator may regard
> Not unamused. But ridicule demands
> Quick change of objects; and to laugh alone,
> . . . in the very centre of the crowd
> To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,
> . . . is least fit
> For the gross spirit of mankind.

American democracy—even today 1984.

I am reminded of the women I serve and am not able to serve: the immigrant Hispanic women crossing our borders are in search of a new life, a new beginning, but they suffer political, social, and economic atrocities which upon dissection appear unAmerican. Allow me to guide you through only a few recent such atrocities.

There is among us in Brownsville, Texas, a young, vibrant, intelligent woman, a widow, and a mother of a bright five-year-old male child. She arrived in the United States three years ago. Her name, let us pretend, is Bernarda. From El Salvador,

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Ms. Gomez is the executive director of the Brownsville Community Health Clinic.

Bernarda is a registered nurse in her country—I have seen all her documents (which since have been "lost" by well-meaning people paid to help her become a legal resident). She fled her country the night she received word that her husband, a federal physician, had been murdered at the border on his way home from being "on call." She spent one night in Mexico prior to arriving in the United States. Bernarda is a professional. She has had to give up custody of her only son to insure him an education and a decent life. For the past three years she has worked as a domestic, and recently she began selling cosmetics in order to make ends meet. Her residency papers have been held up because she spent a night in Mexico. She is not considered a political fugitive. She has had trouble recovering her documents showing her education; therefore, she is ineligible for a reciprocity status in nursing and now must not only master English, but re-take her four years of nurse's training in order to practice her vocation . . . ironic, since we seem unable to close the gap on the nursing shortage and we continue to import nurses from the Philippines. In spite of her dilemma, she is in her second year, studying English and preparing for her graduate equivalency diploma. Our system, free enterprise, ascribing to the false claim of giving everyone an equal chance, has backed this woman up against a brick wall and has caused her literally to crawl, beg and, alas, give up her child while fleeing for her life. She's seen our luxuries, cool breezes, and star-studded nights. Perhaps she has an attainable goal as a professional once more. However, she will not achieve it until she kisses the soles of our feet—after all, it is our country.

Second verse, same as the first--a young woman, twenty-four-years old, mother of three, two boys and a girl. The two older children are school age. The husband works as a maintenance man at a hotel fifteen miles away. The mother faces simpler indignities—no electricity, no plumbing, holes and no insulation in the two-room house with dirt floors situated a half mile from the highway on the way to our lovely resort area, South Padre Island. When it rains or the temperature drops, she worries about her children. She burns sticks and anything she can get her hands on to create some heat. She piles several layers of clothing on her children and checks to see if they are breathing every hour or so until it is time to get up. The cool, gentle gulf breezes gust between fifteen and thirty miles per hour even in the winter months—chilling even to the bone. She has no refrigerator, so she is limited on the types of food she can acquire. She's been living this way for five years. Her two youngest were born here. Where will she go with education? She has hopes for her children, that they will survive the heat, the rain, mosquitoes, and the cold. She hopes they will not be discouraged as they go to school dressed inadequately, not having much hope of having the things other children have. She hopes they will not suffer because of her and her husband's decision to come to the United States from Mexico. The "lot" their modest abode sits on, she says, is all they own. It is almost paid for—all $3,500 worth. They have sacrificed, they have conquered, and, yet, by American standards, they are living in substandard quarters and have not even attained the average educational level for Cameron County—sixth grade. Her chances of ever attaining this level are slim. She smiles with dignity and yet realizes the hurdles she must cross in order to become assimilated in this culture, in this country. She cannot even go to local WIC services for milk, eggs, and cheese vouchers because she lives several miles from the WIC office and does not have transportation nor the five dollars that some neighbors may charge to take her into town. She has no money to pay for child care and thus is unable to consider any formal education. Unfortunately, our free enterprise system condones inhuman slum lord actions . . . there is no pain because there is no contact with the tenant or the buyer . . . strictly a business arrangement.

There is yet a third malevolence to point out. She is about forty, but the social worker admits, "The lady *looks* 60." She first presented herself with an acute problem: her fifteen-year-old daughter was dying; she needed a heart transplant. With nine children and an alcoholic husband, her story became our clinic staff's concern. She and her husband came to the United States seeking a better life for their family. Three years later her husband has lost his job as a gardener at the country club and her daughter has died. While her daughter lay dying in intensive care, her ten-year-old son lay in a hospital bed 480 miles away with a rare disease, chronic neutropenia. The family is living off of the child's Social Security. The boy has gone back to surgery again and has not been hospitalized for two months. As if that were not enough, the mother has now had to press charges against her husband for molesting some children and beating her up.

"She doesn't talk much," her social worker says. "She is your typical immigrant." The worker describes the typical immigrant as "passive, hair pulled back, simple, humble, very grateful even if there is nothing we can do." They stand apart by their dress and a different sadness in their eyes. Their role in society is to take care of their children. Their lack of education is evident and not easily addressed. By the time their children are taken care of, the ladies are worn and not receptive to learning a new language and getting a formal education. To have them learn marketable skills would require transportation, access to day care, and an income. These are insurmountable by themselves. In the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the problem is aggravated by the country's highest unemployment rate (21%) with no relief in sight over the next few years. That leaves a closed door for unskilled labor, particularly female.

The stories do not end here. There is also the young pregnant woman. While this is not her first child, the fetus is not developing the way a normal fetus should develop. She qualifies for no public assistance, and yet she required a B-Scan, a special diagnostic procedure, and now it has been determined she is going to be a high risk delivery. If her child is a viable infant, if this child lives, chances are he/she will be deformed and will become a ward of the state. For a thirty-year-old woman with a language and cultural barrier to be faced with this dilemma adds only one more seemingly insurmountable hurdle.

In Willacy County, a young nineteen-year-old female (she looks fourteen) sits patiently waiting with her two year old. She's pregnant again--she does not know how this happened. Alma and her husband (he looks sixteen) live in a garage. He cuts yards and is earning about $10 a day. The social worker claims, "*Es muy trabajador* (he's a real hard worker you know)." The two year old is covered with mosquito bites. They have no running water, no indoor plumbing, no electricity. The local church has supplied them with oatmeal and milk for the child. This young couple wants work. They have no formal education, and yet they are willing to suffer and are grateful for the *migajas*, bread crumbs, we offer. Thus, two teenagers working for slave wages, attempting to make ends meet, surviving without electric can openers, without soap operas, without ice trays.... There is no room in this young woman's life to think of an education for her child, let alone for herself. Her chances of becoming even a viable candidate for training in a clerical position through WIN are as viable as achieving a grant to Texas Southmost College and graduating.

Neither of these women has health insurance or the money to purchase it, nor is it a priority at this time. Survival is the priority. These women have greater things to deal

AVAILABLE

with than American elevators, escalators, jets, nightlife, stereos, tweed clothes, the latest coiffs, cuisines or gossip. They are about the basics: eating, breathing, sleeping, and loving mankind. They are about thanking God for being alive and seeing their children smile today. They are about laughing alone, about keeping "the secret of a poignant scorn." They are one more side of American democracy, a subgroup, a separate socio-economic/demographic part of our labor force unable to get through the maze of our perfect society with ease—two of the many who fall through the cracks.

We are children of God, like everyone else, according to Mohandas K. Gandhi. After all ". . . the basic question of liberty itself was posed, and we were brought to the verge of the deepest knowledge that man can have of himself . . . the secret of a man is not his Oedipus complex or his inferiority complex: it is the limit of his own liberty, his capacity for resisting torture and death."

We are, all of us, in constant turmoil, some of us deceiving ourselves and our fellow citizens better than others. We are attempting consciously or unconsciously to deal with the "problem" of the immigrant woman. After all, they are the ones who have the children they cannot take care of. They are the ones multiplying the problems of the local economy. They are the ones responsible for generations past, present and future, solely responsible for the dilemma we all find ourselves in. And we, absolved of all responsibility find ourselves arguing within ourselves, feeling a constant discomfort deep inside our gut.

Our sacred bibles tell us "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

. . . Does this mean long distance? Does this mean give to your favorite charity when you have time? Does this mean open your eyes and extend a hand to your fellow man?

We're constantly plagued with, "They're human beings, but I don't want to have lunch with them. They are in pain, but what if they have a disease that I might catch? I can't help them this time because you remember the old saying, 'give them an inch and they'll take a mile.'"

Poverty my dear friends, has been called the worst kind of violence, and for our immigrant women, "politics is bread." We in South Texas are no different than our friends in India or South Africa or Central and South America. Our problems, though basic, are massive.

Our ashram, our community, needs to break down the barriers. We need to cease the blaming. We need to work positively toward success, a unified success. We require action! Not simply research and reaction.

Allow me to share a story with you.

Rabbi Tarfon sat conversing on serious matters with other learned men in a house in Ludd. The question was raised: "Which is more important—learning or action?" Rabbi Tarfon replied, "Action is more important. Of what earthly use are fine words and preachments unless they are put into practice?" Rabbi Akiba upheld the contrary viewpoint: "Learning is more important," he said. The sages finally concluded that both were right: "Learning is more important when it leads to action."

Friends, we have learned that our average person in this area of South Texas is of childbearing age. We have learned that the average formal education in South Texas lies somewhere between fourth- and eighth-grade level. We know that our families are the number one priority and that our faith is the one motivating factor aside from our families that keeps us alive and working toward a better tomorrow.

Our statistics show that hunger, disease, and education are still severe stumbling blocks in our Valley. We know that the programs we have in operation do not adequately address the needs, or, in more apropos terms, "supply does not meet the demand." If we continue to wait for the federal and state governments to give us our tax dollars back in order to take care of our needs, we will never close the gap. In essence, the federal and state governments, our legislators, are to each of us what we are to our immigrants who are drowning in their own mess. The only difference is that we have an education we can share, we have an extra language we can express ourselves in, and we are obviously not hurting enough. We have, my friends, allowed our Americanism to blind us, console us, and deafen us to the misery around us.

Do not misunderstand me. Our actions must take us further than simply to extend a hand. We must in all sincerity instill that pride and determination in all of our fellow Americans. We must teach our "politicos" the art of political discourse, from our city officials to our state and federal officials. While our immigrant woman is a local problem, it has been manifested by state and national attitudes and politics.

So rich in laws, virtue, and science, yet we are poor in accepting responsibility for action. Our priorities must change. We cannot advocate for a restoration of a statue symbolizing our philosophy and our mission statement and in the same breath turn our faces and teach our children that hunger, lack of an education, and disease are things only to be aware of. There is something wrong with our Americanism if we cannot teach our children now about the facts of life and how to deal with them by helping those less fortunate than ourselves rather than to stare and say, "Poor people."

In conclusion, I would reaffirm the plight of those I serve and cannot serve. I implore you to begin an action-oriented plan to set up volunteer tutoring and volunteer child care. Work through your churches, schools, sororities, fraternities. Let us not wait one more generation and one more research study before we implement this plan. They came to our country. We once came to this country with dignity and pride. Let us work together to preserve it.

Hispanic Immigrant Women and Services in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas: An Exploratory Survey

by

Dr. Jose R. Hinojosa

This paper is based on an exploratory survey conducted in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The purpose of the study was to determine if programs authorized by federal legislation are operating in the counties of Cameron and Hidalgo and what, if any, impact they have on the targeted constituency. The laws passed by the United States Congress that we are interested in are the Women's Educational Equity Act, the Adult Education Act, the Vocational Education Act, the Job Training Partnership Act, and the Refugee Act of 1980.

Before discussing the impact of these laws on the Valley, I would like to describe the two counties' economies so that the need for programs authorized by the laws is clear.

In the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas are found two of the poorest standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA) in the United States, recently described as America's "Third World." The SMSA in Hidalgo County has the lowest per capita income in the country ($4,040). The Brownsville-San Benito-Harlingen SMSA in Cameron County is a close second with a per capital income of $4,336. According to the 1980 census, Hidalgo County had a population of 283,323, of which 147,312 were females. Of the 65,139 families that reside in Hidalgo County, 18,920 families, or 29 percent, lived below the poverty level. This means 99,081 individuals live in poverty, or 35.2 percent.

The Cameron County, Brownsville-San Benito-Harlingen SMSA had a 1980 population of 209,727. Two major economic blows have recently hit this already impoverished area, the Mexican peso devaluation crisis and the severely damaging winter freeze of last December. Both Hidalgo and Cameron Counties depend heavily on trade with Mexico and agriculture for their economic existence. This year the economic situation in the Lower Rio Grande Valley has been far worse than usual. To all this is added a continuous influx of immigrants, both legal and illegal, and an ever growing stream of war-fleeing refugees from Central America, particularly from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

Economic conditions are not usually good in this sector of Texas, so a large number of public and private organizations try desperately to provide social services in a crisis environment. They are barely funded considering the need, undermanned considering the work load, and constantly under fire from clients who feel they do not get enough assistance, or pressured from others for doing "too much" and for spoiling the recipients from working.

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We surveyed fifteen of the major public and private social service agencies and asked them if the five federal laws mentioned above were being implemented by them or by some other local organizations. We specifically focused on Hispanic immigrant women as potential clients and receivers of services. The responses were all basically the same. Whatever programs and activities they sponsored are for everybody that meets the qualification guidelines, but there is no specific focus on a particular group, much less on immigrants or women. The Hispanic category was taken for granted since the population is nearly 80 percent of Spanish origin and most of those served by the agencies are Mexican-Americans. We did not find one agency that specifically concentrated on assisting Hispanic immigrant women. We did find that most do serve Hispanic women, but to what extent depends on the program and the agency. And we did find some assistance to legal resident immigrants. None would admit serving illegal or undocumented immigrants, for it is understood by most service providers that the undocumented are ineligible for assistance.

The two policies that unquestionably have no effect in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas are the Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) and the Refugee Act of 1980. Here all the agencies surveyed reported that funds from these measures were simply not allocated to the area or the programs did not meet their constituency's needs. There was one agency that we surveyed that was definitely interested in the WEEA and mentioned having submitted proposals to the Departments of Education and Labor for consideration, but unsuccessfully thus far. The Women's Employment and Education Service, situated at 420 North 21st Street in McAllen, mentioned that approximately 10 percent of the clients were permanent resident aliens and that they have established English language classes for Hispanic immigrant women. However, they, like other agencies, depend on local support and not on state or federal grants. Given the fact that they deal almost exclusively with the hard-core unemployed women and dislocated female workers, they do a commendable job, by providing counseling, mutual psychological reinforcement and referrals to other agencies. Another organization that is closely allied with WEEA is Mujers Unidas-Women Together, which tries to help all women with family violence and sexual assault problems. Mujers Unidas tries to serve all womem who have domestic violence problems, but unfortunately they do not have the ability to serve in other areas such as employment, except by referring the women to agencies. Given the seriousness of and crisis climate that predominates in their line of work, it is, however, understandable why they have to concentrate their efforts on the immediate problems that face their constituency. They, perhaps better than many other organizations, are fully aware of the tremendous problems and multitude of unmet needs that women in general face and what Hispanic females in particular, whether immigrants or citizens, have to deal with.

The three policies that have the most impact in the Lower Rio Grande Valley are the Adult Education Act, the Vocational Education Act, and the Job Training Partnership Act. All of these policies are implemented in one fashion or another; however, the concentration on women immigrants is very limited. The Texas Employment Commission, the Cameron County Private Industry Council, and the Willacy-Hidalgo Counties Private Industry Council all provide employment and training programs and activities, but these services are provided for everybody who qualifies for these activites, and no special effort to serve Hispanic immigrant women is undertaken. But all of these organizations serve women. From July 1 to September 11, the Willacy-Hidalgo County Private Industry

Council served 118 female enrollees. However, this organization keeps no data about what number of those served were citizens or resident aliens.

Adult education Hidalgo County, for instance, provides free instructional programs for all adults. In 1982, over 4,800 persons were served, and during 1983 some 5,200 persons were enrolled in these programs. Females accounted for 65 to 75 percent of those served, with about 99 percent being Mexican-Americans. About 40 or 45 percent of the persons served are migrant workers. The programs are 50 percent ESL. However, while birth certificate or other reliable documents, as determined by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), are asked to be produced to determine eligibility, no data are kept on how many citizens or resident aliens are served or how many illegal immigrants request assistance but are turned down because they fail to qualify for the services.

To conclude this brief survey, we can argue that there are several viable programs available that are trying desperately to cope with the demand and need, but unfortunately they barely reach the tip of the iceberg. Most services are geared to all people; thus, there is no focus on or concentrated effort to reach Hispanic immigrant women. While undoubtedly some Hispanic immigrant women do receive some educational and employment assistance, it may be more by accident than by design.

There are some serious faults with the service system in the Valley in general. For instance, there is no women's network, no coordination of services, and a very weak infrastructure.* In particular, for example, there is a tremendous need for child daycare services and there are many public and private organizations providing this necessary assistance, but there is no county- or valley-wide cooperative effort to organize these many separate agencies into one coordinated service. Another tremendous need is a mass transportation system. While the city of Brownsville has such a system, the rest of the Valley is lacking a coordinated, well planned and efficient mass transportation system. It is estimated that from 30 to 40 percent of lower income women do not have access to transportation and thus are unable to reach education and employment opportunities.

Many local organizations spend most of their limited time and resources on short-range, band-aid help in crises or emergencies. There appears to be a need for a county-wide or even valley-wide agencies' council so that planning and execution can be carried out in a more deliberate and efficient manner. There should at least be a valley cooperative that deals only with women's issues. That the women are Hispanic or immigrant should be important in the sense that those factors could be crucial elements in assessing their problems and meeting their needs. Also, while education and employment are certainly important, the necessary support services and incentives should not be forgotten.

The problems that all women face, and that Hispanic immigrant women in particular face, are too important to the overall development and improvement of this region to be ignored. None of us should passively accept the present conditions of women in this area.

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*Note: An organization of social service providers does exist and has had several meetings for the purpose of exchanging information about their services.

We should insist that decision makers and service providers fully comprehend the impact that neglect of women's needs has on all of the society. A society that neglects its women, neglects its children, and is thus neglecting its future.

List of Agencies Surveyed

Cameron County Adult Basic Education

Cameron County Community Development Corporation

Cameron-Willacy Counties Community Projects, Inc.

Catholic Relief Services

Catholic Social Services

Good Neighbor Settlement House

Hidalgo County Adult Basic Education

Hidalgo-Willacy Counties Private Industry Council

Mujers Unidas-Women Together

National Farm Workers Service Center

Planned Parenthood Association

Region One Education Service Center

Texas Employment Commission

Tropical Texas Center for Mental Health and Mental Retardation

Women's Employment and Education Service

Dialogue Proceedings

The Hispanic immigrant woman's story is to a great extent one of a struggle to survive. Before she can think about improving her English, attending school, or making career choices, she must concern herself with meeting her family's basic needs. Where will they sleep that night? Can they find a decent place to wash themselves? And if their most basic needs are met, will she have the resources needed for seeking a job? As one dialogue participant explained, the Hispanic immigrant woman may not have enough money to ride the bus or buy gas to go to the doctor, let alone the money required to "look all over town for a job."

The Cycle

This is not to suggest that the woman does not want to work. Indeed, the contrary is true. She does want to make a better life for her family and herself, but she is caught in the proverbial vicious cycle. Participants in the dialogue seemed to speak with one voice as they described this cycle. First, the woman needs to know English. In order to attend English classes, she needs access to child care. To get to the child care facilities, she needs transportation. Having transportation requires money for bus fare or gas. To have money she needs a job. To get a job, she needs to know English. To learn English.... And even if the woman has sufficient language and job skills, she gets caught in the cycle as soon as she needs child care, transportation, and money to look for a job.

Let us consider each of these obstacles, and others, in turn. Of paramount importance is the immigrant woman's need to know English. One woman at the conference told of her recent job search: after six months and 100 applications, she is still unemployed. Why? All of the positions, even ones in menial labor, required her to be able to speak English. Moreover, the dimensions of this obstacle have increased since the peso devaluation. Dialogue participants speculated that the peso devaluation resulted in fewer Mexicans' having the money to spend on trips to Brownsville and, as a consequence, employers began to hire more English-speaking workers to serve their English-speaking clientele.

Whatever the cause may be, it is less important than its consequence: these women need to learn English. Participants explained that two language programs are available, but one is operated at night, when the women cannot leave their children, and the other charges $2.00 a day, a prohibitive fee for most of these women.

A second concern is the lack of sufficient child care services. Granted, a couple of facilities do exist, but their hours do not extend to include all of the times needed by the woman if she is to attend language classes, participate in vocational training, look for a job, or go to work each day. Even these limited services are not viable options for the many mothers on the waiting lists or for mothers of young infants, who are not typically accepted at child care centers. Finally, many women cannot take advantage of the existing services because they do not have the resources for transportation to the daycare center.

A third obstacle confronting the Hispanic immigrant woman is her limited access to vocational training programs. The local Job Training Partnership Act program has so many applicants that program operators do not need to provide incentives, such as stipends, to attract participants. Unfortunately, even the highly motivated immigrant woman generally cannot participate unless she has the support of a stipend. In addition, if the woman cannot afford to take advantage of training that is free, then of what value to her are supposedly minimal-cost training programs? A six-week course for nurse's aides, for example, costs $500. Furthermore, it is interesting to note, as one job counselor did, that the nurse's aide will earn only $3.35 an hour anyway.

Prerequisites for enrolling in the nurse's aide program raise another issue, the education barrier. This program requires a student to have a high school diploma or its equivalent. However, as a job counselor explained, the aide's actual duties have been assessed as requiring an eighth-grade reading level. This phenomenon—having artificially high standards for enrollment—also occurs in the workplace. Participants said that many employment opportunities are unnecessarily closed to immigrant women because of the high educational level sought by employers.

Thus far, the focus has been on the minimally trained, minimally job-ready woman. However, there is another segment of the immigrant women population which faces special barriers to employment. They are the professionals, the teachers and nurses whose credentials were earned in their countries of origin. Consider the example of the trained and experienced teacher who arrives in America to find that neither her training nor her experience is accepted toward her recertification; not even her college credits are accepted. So she must begin again.

Breaking the Cycle

The barriers to the Hispanic immigrant woman's entrance into the labor force are interwoven so that they form a cycle. Can this cycle, which keeps her unemployed and struggling, be broken? Yes, said participants. The way to break the cycle is to offer child care services at the sites where the woman will learn English and where she will participate in training. Also recommended were English classes and child care services offered at the job site.

A third recommendation concerned training opportunities. More training programs are needed, but they must be designed with the immigrant woman in mind. Not only does this mean making child care available, but it also suggests that the training should be free and, if possible, stipends should be offered. Also, training programs should not require educational attainment levels higher than are actually needed. Finally, such a program needs to include some vehicle for helping the woman develop her confidence and knowledge of the world of work. Some participants claimed that the immigrant's greatest obstacle is her fear. Specifically, she fears someone will laugh at her when she tries to speak English. Therefore, she needs encouragement from a support group, perhaps even a class in self-awareness. Another avenue for helping her develop confidence is to build into the training program some achievable tasks so that she can experience the successes that contribute to positive feelings about one's abilities.

A class that addresses the woman's self-esteem and confidence might be the natural context in which to introduce her to the American world of work, because some of the problems she could have in approaching a prospective employer and dealing with him on the job stem from her own culture and socialization. For example, participants described the process of applying at a factory as too impersonal and too discouraging for some immigrants. Clearly, the immigrant who needs to work needs to be prepared to handle the American job search.

On the job there are other problems. Some participants reported that when the immigrant woman is the victim of sexual harassment, she quits rather than talk to someone about the situation. Sometimes her silence is due to her culturally sanctioned reticence, but in other cases, it is a matter of her feeling so grateful to have a job that she accepts bad working conditions. Or, if she faces discrimination based on her age, sex, or race, she may quit beause the injustice has hurt her pride. Thus, she needs to learn that there are laws that protect her from discrimination at the same time that she is made aware of the role her own culture plays in the way she reacts to and handles the world.

As for the professional whose education and experience are not counted toward her recertification, it seems obvious that what is needed is better articulation between the schools and professional organizations that are involved in certification and accreditation. America needs nurses and teachers, not newcomers dependent upon welfare assistance.

How Business, the Community, and Service Providers Can Help

Let us now imagine that the the cycle has been broken, that the woman is prepared to find and keep a job. Now the only problem is that, except for professional positions, there are very few jobs available. Brownsville's unemployment rate is high, some say as high as 21 percent. Granted, this percentage is greater than the corresponding figures for many places where other Hispanic immigrants have resettled, but that does not mean that the problem is particular to Brownsville. On the contrary, all communities which are home to waves of immigrants potentially face conflict and tension when newcomers compete with community members for jobs, and the situation is only aggravated when jobs are scarce. One solution might be for communities to encourage companies to build factories in their areas; however, this will not create more jobs if the companies simply cross the border to find cheaper labor and materials.

Perhaps a better solution is the one recommended, in general contexts and for several reasons, by participants: develop a network of businessmen, community members, and service providers for the purpose of educating them about the newest members of their community. Perhaps if the business community were made more sensitive to the needs of immigrant women, it would recognize the importance of providing child care at the workplace. Also, the business owner who is educated about the strengths of these women is more likely than the ignorant owner to reevaluate his employment policies, such as requiring the equivalent of a high school diploma for jobs that actual demand less education. Third, the informed business owner may be more likely not to cross the border in search of inexpensive labor and materials.

Educating community members could help relieve any tensions that arise from resentment toward new arrivals. Some people believe that immigrants do not want to work but would rather live comfortably off of their welfare checks; these people need to be educated about the facts. Also, the educated community member who is receptive to new arrivals would be more willing to contribute to efforts to create more jobs locally so that they do not perceive themselves as being in competition with new arrivals for jobs.

Furthermore, education and sensitivity could help tear down some of the barriers between the immigrant woman and social services agencies so that services are provided in a more efficient and effective manner. For example, the service provider who understands that his client's culture encourages her not to "make waves" and not to be forthcoming with information will know that assessing that client's eligibility for services requires him to ask the questions. There have been cases in which immigrant women have been wrongly disqualified for services simply because they did not offer information and the provider did not realize he had to ask questions. In other cases, the immigrant women have not been denied eligibility, but they have had to spend a lot of time running back and forth, trying to give the provider all the information he needs. In one instance, a woman was sent away four times from the state Department of Human Resources to get further information. Had the service provider known more about the client's culture, he would have been prepared, say, to ask about all the documents she needed at one time.

Other aspects of service delivery could be improved through greater sensitivity to the client's culture. For example, the client needs to understand how to dress to apply for jobs, and service providers typically do offer this information, but their method may not be appropriate. As one person explained, an immigrant who comes from a people-oriented culture, as opposed to a production- or group-oriented society, is unprepared to handle filling out impersonal forms and discussing "eligibility." Providers need to take a "personal" approach and need to give information in a culturally appropriate manner.

A related example concerns the delivery of health care and counseling in family planning. There are many contributing factors that result in a high number of pregnancies among some Hispanic groups, including the fact that women from rural, farming backgrounds come from societies in which having many children is an advantage. Whatever the reasons may be, for the purposes of this discussion, they are less important than the resulting inference that the girls and women need an orientation to family planning. A woman who does not know how she got pregnant may get pregnant again. And although no one would deny her this meaningful experience, if she is living in poverty, is unemployed, and has few chances for improving her life, this experience may need to be postponed. But how? If she was raised in a typical Hispanic home, she did not talk about nor has she learned much about sex. Service providers need to understand this and more about the women they help.

While some service providers need to develop greater understanding of their clients' culture, others may need simply to remember to remain sensitive to their clients. One woman described her experience with a caseworker when she needed to submit her monthly status report (which incidentally, she had to have read to her at another agency). The caseworker excused himself, saying he would be back soon. Submissive and patient, the immigrant sat in the office from 2:00 to 5:00, until the agency was closing for the day. When she left the office to inquire about the caseworker, she was told, "He left a long time ago." Other immigrants report being treated "roughly" and being spoken to rudely. In fact, one woman said that she thinks some people living in poverty do not seek help because of their pride; they stay away from agencies, she argued, because they fear being treated poorly.

How has this situation evolved? Participants explained that service providers have too much paperwork to do and too many difficult forms to complete just to say, "This woman has a need." Federal regulations were identified as a major source of the paperwork problem. The seemingly uncaring service provider in fact probably cares too much and feels frustrated that he cannot give the assistance he would like.

Judging from the comments made during the New Directions Conference, one would say the people in the various agencies are highly motivated to help, but they must do it through an imperfect system and in an imperfect world. For instance, the director of a women's shelter reported having served 98 women since January, a figure which she explained represents only 1 percent of the women who need to be served. That means there are approximately another 9,800 women who go unserved. A representative of the State Department of Human Resources estimates that between twenty and forty women come in every day to ask for shelter. Sadly, the available units are relatively few, especially in comparison to the need.

While developing housing is costly and time-consuming, other problems seem to be easier to solve. Consider the case of a woman who wants to sign up to receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). She will be shuffled between agencies on opposite ends of the town several times. Where does she get the money for bus fare? What does she do with her children? And how long will it be before she gets an appointment with one of the three social workers that are to serve 3,000 families? A solution which appears not to be too costly is to house the agencies together. Also, more social workers are needed.

Hiring people and moving agencies are not no-cost solutions, but at least they are solutions. Other concerns involve such complex issues that "easy" recommendations do not suggest themselves. Chief among these is what to do about the many undocumented, or illegal, immigrant women.

If the undocumented woman has a child born in America, the mother can stay here and she can receive AFDC and food stamps for the child. However, the woman herself is not eligible to receive health care, job services, or any of the assistance she needs if she is to become a productive member of our society. Then, after her child has left home, the woman, who does not qualify for Social Security, is even worse off. If she is like many illegal immigrants, she has been here for five, ten, even fifteen years. She has no access to the support services she desperately needs, but she is here, presumably, to stay. What is she to do now? Service providers expressed great frustration at not being able to help this woman in need.

They also discussed the situation of the worker whose welfare benefits stop after she has been on her new job for several months. In some cases, they see the person laid off; so now there are no income and no benefits, and requalifying for assistance takes time. In other instances, workers have been known to panic and quit their jobs when faced with the prospect of losing benefits. Another problem that surfaced during the dialogue is that a person cannot receive food stamps if she is living with a relative who receives food stamps. For instance, if a woman lives with her daughter and granddaughter and is receiving food stamps, then her daughter cannot. The problem, as one participant expressed it, is that "families are living with families "—a predictable situation, given the low income levels and lack of housing—so people who would otherwise qualify to receive food stamps, do not.

Before closing this discussion, a few final remarks are in order. First, some of the obstacles to the Hispanic immigrant woman's entrance into the labor market, such as high unemployment rates, are not easily overcome. However, throughout the dialogue many of the barriers that can be removed were identified and appropriate recommendations were made. Second, while many of the recommendations were directed toward improving the situation in Brownsville, they are of course applicable to any community that has many new immigants. And third, much of the dialogue was concerned with issues other than employment and training, such as housing. This is because a woman will not think about entering a training program or finding a job if she has no money, no place to live, and children dependent on her for their survival.

Perhaps the best way to summarize the plight of the Hispanic immigrant woman is to let her speak for herself. When the women were asked at the end of the day if there was anything they wanted to say, two women spoke up: "I just want to work. A job, that's what I need." "I do, too. I also need housing—I have no place to live."

Chapter 4

HELPING THE NEW WAVE WOMEN ENTER THE LABOR FORCE: PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

Despite the lack of an adequate database on female Southeast Asian refugees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and Hispanic immigrants, and despite the differences among these groups and their subgroups, certain generalizations can be made: These women received little or no formal education in their countries of origin, they have limited English language proficiency, and they often lack job skills transferable to the American labor market. Most of them are faced with making severe cultural adjustments, having moved from rural and agricultural societies to urban and industrialized environments, while also coping with the problems and traumas attendant upon the circumstances of their arrival to the United States. As they attempt to meet their familial responsibilities, they must simultaneously struggle to redefine their roles as wife, mother, daughter, community member, and worker.

Another, more graphic view of these women's situations is offered by Ellen Bruno, Coordinator of the Cambodian Women's Project in New York City, in her narration of one female refugee's transition from Khao-I-Dang to the Bronx:

> Seng Chantha stepped off Flying Tigers flight 662 in January and learned about the cold. A son of 11 and three younger children trailed behind balancing soiled bundles of clothing and yellowed photographs on their heads. Together they entered America through electronically operated doors at JFK....
>
> Now I visit Chantha at 183rd Street in the Bronx, a tough neighborhood by any standards and certainly different than anything she has ever known. At times we laugh about times in Khao-I-Dang as though they were the good old days....
>
> Life is difficult here without her people around to offer her the illusion of safety. Chantha's last home before Khao-I-Dang was a raised bamboo hut above the rice paddies of Siem Riep Provence in Cambodia. She worked those fields with her husband until the Khmer Rouge unsettled her country with forced relocation and hard labor that killed. Her husband was killed with the blow of an ax for failing to work when near-dead with malaria. Her youngest two children died a slow death before the rest managed to escape to Thailand in 1979. There was no food. Chantha considers herself lucky in the face of what others have suffered.
>
> In the Bronx, everything is strange...the toilet, refrigerator, the gas stove. Chantha tried to catch the pigeons on the windowsill at first, a delicacy in Cambodia. What little English she speaks, the neighbors don't understand. They have a language of their own. She

> walks barefoot to the store wrapped in her native sarong, not knowing yet how to keep out the cold. The two older children go off to school and soon they speak strange words and learn strange ways. Chantha knows nothing of this new world where everything is a struggle for her.[1]

It is against this backdrop that we assess the efforts of service providers and federal agencies to help female newcomers enter the labor force and achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible—the expressed goal of the Refugee Act of 1980 and the underpinning of other federal legislation and activity. To present a balanced portrait of what is being done, we will review projects and policies from two perspectives. First, we will present the "near" view by describing specific, exemplary projects which serve newcomers; such a view is useful not only for service providers but also for policy makers who may be so far removed from the "field" that they do not have access to this necessary information. Second, we will paint the picture large by discussing the key pieces of legislation which authorize the services designed to facilitate these women's entrance into the labor market.

Model Projects

Homebound Women's Projects: Overcoming the Child Care Barrier

A discussion of projects serving female newcomers logically begins here because "homebound projects" were among the first programs to be designed as vehicles for helping newcomers adjust to their new society and enter the labor force. Furthermore, unlike most of the programs presented below, these typically serve women only, rather than men and women.

Homebound projects are usually conducted in facilities near the women's homes and generally provide child care. The rationale behind these programs is that many women have not been able to participate in other programs because they have had to remain at home to take care of their children. Indeed, students in the now-defunct Homebound Women's Project sponsored by the Indochinese Community Center in Washington, D.C., said that they would not or could not attend classes without the child care arrangements provided.[2]

An excellent example of these projects is the Cambodian Women's Project (CWP), which is both typical and atypical of programs described later in this chapter. First, unlike most programs, CWP, conducted by the American Friends Service Committee, is funded by private concerns rather than the federal government. Also, whereas many programs are concerned with initial resettlement, CWP aims to aid in the acculturation process during the difficult post-survival period, when depression and mourning are great, and it serves many women previously unable to take advantage of any program because of their child care responsibilities. However, with respect to the clients served, CWP is representative of many projects. Most of the women come from rural, poor backgrounds, they do not know English, and they do not possess marketable skills.[3] Also, many are illiterate in their native Khmer.[4]

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[1] Ellen Bruno, "The Seng Family and Others," Quaker Service Bulletin 64, No. 146, Fall 1983, n. pag.

[2] ESL/Homebound Women's Project, Project Description (Washington: Indochinese Community Center, August 22, 1983), p. 1, photocopy.

The goals of CWP are for the women to learn to cope with their new situation and to realize their potential for self-sufficiency and employability.[5] To achieve these objectives, CWP provides several services: English as a second language (ESL) instruction, survival skills workshops, and skills training—and, of course, child care. ESL classes emphasizing survival speaking skills are held within walking distance from the students' homes at community centers on two or three mornings a week and are taught by volunteer teachers and ESL student interns from nearby universities. The workshops address health, education, and cultural topics; among these are an introduction to American education (so that mothers can understand their children's educational programs) and crime prevention. Finally, participants have the opportunity to learn knitting and sewing in their homes.[6]

In sum, CWP may be seen as a model program for the services it offers and, perhaps more importantly, for its method of delivering these services.

Craft Cooperatives: Building Upon Existing Skills

Another approach to helping female newcomers become contributing members of American society is to teach them how to market the handicrafts they learned to produce in their native countries and how to operate craft cooperatives. Like homebound projects, these cooperatives serve women almost exclusively, in this case because it is they, not their male counterparts, who possess the skills. H'mong women, for example, were not taught to read and write, but from age seven were instructed in the intricate and beautiful art of pa n'dau and other homemaking activities.

The operation of these cooperatives was the subject of a survey conducted by the Refugee Women in Development Project, a national program which addresses refugee women's needs and supports their self-help efforts. According to this survey of 25 craft cooperatives, groups may have as few as five members or as many as 415.[7] The

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[3] Cambodian Women's Project, Project Description (New York: American Friends Service Committee, n.d.), photocopy.

[4] Bruno.

[5] Cambodian Women's Project.

[6] Bruno.

[7] Information on this survey comes from the Refugee Women in Development Project, "Artists, Artisans, and Entrepreneurs: Diversification in Refugee Women's Textile Enterprises in the U.S. Part I—Overview" (Washington: Refugee Women in Development Project, July 1983).

Southeast Asian women, and particularly the H'mong, were found to be the most organized and enterprising. Haitian women in Miami have also started to promote their traditional embroidery and crocheting, although their efforts have been somewhat impeded by the ambiguities associated with their entrant status. Among the marketed items are pa n'dau, traditional hangings, placemats, and napkins, and one group has even promoted a line of designer gowns in New York. Gross sales figures show that the average income for one year was approximately $27,000, the highest being approximately $150,000. However, it is important to note that the majority of individual artists' realized a return of under $500, with a "handful" earning between $500 and $3,000—not by any measure enough for self-sufficiency. Moreover, policy makers should know that, as in a few cases in California, cash assistance eligibility criteria are disincentives to textile artisans' efforts: Costs of materials, the greatest expense for these self-employed women, are not considered deductible work-related expenses, and thus cash assistance allowances, when adjusted for gross income from sales, were so reduced that the women received less total income than if they had not worked at all.

Still, craft cooperatives do stand as a viable means for aiding these women's movement toward economic self-sufficiency. Also, there are benefits other then direct sales income. Most of these programs offer training in the context of textile workshops. Some have formal programs to teach the women to assume full responsibility for the enterprise so that they can "run the shop"; others offer management and production skills training. As a result, in some cooperatives, the women have been employed as sales and administrative personnel or have taken control of the cooperative. Training in production sewing techniques allowed some women to obtain positions in garment businesses, while others were able to find employment in enterprises unrelated to textiles because of their increased confidence and skills. Finally, craft cooperatives were found valuable not only for generating income and developing marketable skills but also for preserving the cultures of these displaced women.

To illustrate the cost-effectiveness of these programs, we need consider just one exemplary project. Cottage Crafts, an ESL Cottage Industry and Employment Program, was conducted by the Lancaster-Lebanon Indermediate Unit 13 in Pennsylvania in 1982-83.[8] Funded as a Section 310 project authorized by the Adult Education Act, Cottage Crafts served mainly H'mong women and some Laotian and Cambodian women. Because their cultural mores dictate the women stay home during their child-bearing years and the elderly women be cared for at home by their younger kin, they would not normally have support to enter the American labor force. This program sought to provide them with marketable skills and knowledge while creating a vehicle for preserving their native crafts and folklife. They received their initial counseling in their own homes. ESL classes outside the home were recommended, but for those who were homebound, volunteer tutors were provided. "Life skills" instruction—for instance, knowledge of colors, measurements, taxes, telephone usage—took place during home visits.

Before addressing the clear and measurable success of this program, we would like to describe Cottage Crafts' techniques for three key aspects of any effective program for female newcomers. First, outreach (the identification of eligible participants) was accomplished with the help of families' sponsors. Second, the women themselves were involved in all phases of the project, from setting prices to purchasing fabrics; program operators agree such involvement is crucial. Finally, volunteers were used as ESL and sewing machine tutors and they helped at the sales, provided transportation, recorded inventory, and more. Use of volunteers was necessitated by a slender budget, a common situation in programs.

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[8] Information on this program comes from Cottage Crafts Final Report, by Sherry Royce, Jean Henry, and Doris Zook, Adult Education Project No. 98-3007 (Neffsville, Pennsylvania: Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13, n.d.).

Was the program successful? Absolutely. Funded at $19,855, Cottage Crafts paid for itself by more than five times in terms of income generated by sales of H'mong pa n'dau ($5,500) and jobs obtained by participants (twelve people found full-time employment and fourteen people obtained part-time positions). In addition, or perhaps because of the project, the H'mong community established a cooperative oriental food and gift store with minimal aid from the project staff. In sum, Cottage Crafts enabled these women to achieve or move closer to economic self-sufficiency.

Will the project be continued? Unfortunately, no. The project had to turn back a grant awarded for continuing and expanding its services. The terms of the grant required the project to obtain one-third matching funds. At the last minute, the funding level of the agency which had agreed to provide the match was reduced, and so they were unable to honor their commitment. Thus, Cottage Crafts was unable to accept the grant.[9] It should be noted, then, that the survival of any program is in part a function of the economy.

Training Programs for Women: Developing New Skills

Very few programs offer vocational skills training for women only. This is unfortunate because much of the training is for traditionally male occupations, but as a 1981 study of Indochinese female refugees notes, "women tend to participate more in work they feel best suits them (i.e., clerical or home economics)."[10] Other reports and service providers echo the belief that the women are more likely to seek vocational training if they deem the occupation appropriate and acceptable. (The irony is that if the women were more open to non-traditional careers, they might easily find employment with firms sensitive to the goals of affirmative action.)

Vocational training programs which target women have proven successful. An outstanding example is the Bilingual Microcomputer Training Project (BMT) operated by the Hispanic American Career Educational Resources, Inc./Hispanic Women's Center in New York City.[11]. Funded by a Bilingual Vocational Training grant (authorized by the

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[9] Telephone interview with Sherry Royce, Project Director, Cottage Crafts, November 14, 1983.

[10] Equity Policy Center, "Indochinese Refugees: Special Needs of Women" (Washington: Equity Policy Center, January 1981), p. 21.

[11] Information on this program comes from Bilingual Microcomputer Training Project Final Report, a Bilingual Vocational Training Program (New York: Hispanic American Career Educational Resources Inc./Hispanic Women's Center, n.d.).

Vocational Educational Act of 1963, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1976) and in-kind contributions and matching funds from the private sector and foundations, BMT provides Hispanics, some of whom are newcomers, with entry-level skills and job-related English skills. From July 19[illegible] to July 1983, 83 of the 84 participants were female. The program has four components. The ESL/business component provides instruction in such topics as office procedures, punctuation, and business letters. Students also receive an orientation to the American world of work in a survey of what is expected of them on the job, qualifications they need, and images they should project. The microcomputer component is designed to offer students a background in typing, text editing systems, the microcomputer, and job- and microcomputer-related language. In the job development component, job skills are introduced. Students learn about interviewing, appearance, cooperation, work standards, and more. Placement assistance through liaisons with the private sector, a job bank, workshops, career fairs and other techniques is available, but students are told they are responsible for their own placement—which is in keeping with the project's approach to encouraging their independence and self-sufficiency.

The fourth component is support and counseling. Individual consultations with staff members and peer group support systems developed through classroom activities encourage the students' persistence. Also, BMT facilitates the crucial support from family and friends by offering computer literacy classes on weekends to people who help the trainees with financial, emotional, or child care support; they in turn are better able to understand the trainees' situation. This aspect of the program appears to be unique, and it is well worth noting because service providers consistently comment upon family conflicts and lack of support which hinder women's participation in programs.

Two other "women problems" (a misnomer, for it suggests the women are the cause of the obstacles) are child care and transportation. BMT has no funds for either supportive service. Child care, the project director explained, is the cause of most absences, although in general attendance is good. The cost of transportation is a burden for some students.[12]

BMT is not designed nor intended to serve only women who have recently arrived in America; nonetheless, it should be considered as a model for future projects. Given the national goal of helping newcomers achieve economic self-sufficiency and reduce their welfare dependency, BMT's employment outcomes cannot be ignored. Upon entering the program, 77 percent of the participants were unemployed and 13 percent were on public assistance. At the end of their studies, 69 percent of the unemployed and 46 percent of the assistance recipients found full-time, unsubsidized positions. Granted, involvement in a program like BMT assumes basic literacy and some degree of acculturation—two characteristics not shared by all of this study's targeted population. However, they may well be ready for this kind of program (and certainly many of them need such marketable skills) in a few years.

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[12] Telephone interview with Norma Stanton, Project Director, Bilingual Microcomputer Training Project, November 14, 1983.

Programs Serving Men and Women: Helping Newcomers Survive and Find Jobs

We turn now to the vast majority of programs which serve newcomers. Although it is impossible to determine how many of these programs are in operation, one service provider estimated their number to be—and one assumes more than a touch of hyperbole here—thousands. A more reasonable estimate is a couple hundred, but, again, no one knows because they are funded and conducted by various agencies and nonprofit organizations and, unfortunately, there is no central clearinghouse for this kind of information.

These programs typically provide intake assessment of language and potential for employment, ESL in the context of cultural orientation or specific vocations, and job development, referral, and placement services. Comments from service providers suggest that generally more men than women are served but that women, who are less reluctant than men to take low-level jobs, are easier to place. Typical jobs obtained by women are in housekeeping in hotels and kitchen work in restaurants.

A discussion of three programs in areas of high impact follows.

Los Angeles Unified School District's Refugee Employment Training Project[13]

In California, refugees are referred by voluntary agencies, the County Welfare Department, State Employment Development Department, refugee mutual assistance associations, other agencies, and themselves to the Central Intake Unit (CIU) in their residential area, where their eligibility for services is determined and their skills are assessed. The CIUs then refer them to organizations providing one or more of the services targeted for helping them achieve economic self-sufficiency: ESL, vocational training, vocational ESL (VESL, instruction in vocational-specific language), job placement, health accessing, and mental health accessing. A refugee may be assessed to need one or more of these services. The Refugee Employment Training Project (RETP) is one of these providers. It offers ESL at the pre-literate and survival levels. If the refugee is job-ready after language instruction, he receives job placement services from the CIU. If not, he may be enrolled in one of over 200 vocational training classes and VESL prior to job placement services with RETP, which include job development (that is developing job leads, making contacts with employers, and creating new employment opportunities for clients), job referral and placement, and follow-ups 30, 60, and 90 days after employment.

Addressing the special needs of female refugees, Rochelle Young, RETP's Employment Counseling Coordinator, emphasized that they usually need support services and counseling during training. She explained, as did other service providers throughout the country, that these women may face marital conflicts (for example, when their husbands want them to stay home or not earn more than the husbands) and other social adjustment problems. Also, lack of child care and transportation have hurt women's ability to complete ESL classes and vocational training.

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[13] Information for this section comes from a telephone interview with Rochelle Young, Employment Counseling Coordinator, Refugee Employment Training Project, November 14, 1983, and letter received from Rochelle Young, June 4, 1984.

Arlington Virginia's Refugee Education and Employment Program[14]

The Refugee Education and Employment Program (REEP), selected as one of a handful of model projects by the Office of Refugee Resettlement's (ORR) Employment Services Project for its Best Practices report, is similar to Los Angeles' RETP in several ways. Like RETP, it is funded by ORR and is part of a well organized system. Voluntary agencies refer participants to the Arlington County Department of Human Resources' Central Entry for Refugees, where clients receive a health screening and are referred to REEP.

At REEP, which is the designated agency for refugee employment services, clients' employability potential is assessed. As REEP's goal is to enhance their employability and place them in permanent, unsubsized jobs, refugees are counseled into one of two tracks. Some are assessed to need employment assistance only, while most are placed in an ESL/employment assistance program. The former group may receive the following services: vocational assessment (the refugee and job counselor devise an employability development plan which includes the client's work history, interests, and employment barriers), referrals for vocational training, lessons in acculturation and job search information (a workshop covering work skills such as understanding American job titles, filling in application forms, interviewing, and taking supervision), job development (through "networking" and reading trade journals, newspapers, and other resources for jobs), job placement (counselors may orient the employer and client, take the client to the interview, and help arrange for child care and transportation), and job follow-up (to identify and correct problems, the counselor checks a day or two after employment begins, sometimes a week later, and then 30, 60, and 90 days later; the file is closed after 90 days).

Clients who are not job-ready receive employment assistance while enrolled in ESL classes. Typical of ESL programs, REEP's classes emphasize the language essential to employment and daily life management and specific to a vocational area, in other words, ESL in the context of employment information. REEP has an excellent reputation for its locally developed ESL materials which have been used by other practitioners; the program offers eight levels of competency-based materials (four for people with zero to five years of education and four for people with six or more years of education), a program for illiterate, pre-literate, or semi-literate clients, and a class for people with good speaking skills but weak reading and writing skills. Students' work and personal schedules are accomodated, with classes being held in the mornings, afternoons, and evenings.

Like other programs, REEP relies on volunteers for many forms of help, from clerical support to aid in the classroom.

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[14] Information for this program comes from a personal interview with Elaine Squeri, Employment Counselor, Refugee Educational and Employment Program, November 17, 1983.

Currently, REEP's success rate--placements in jobs for at least 90 days--is 78 percent. Employment counselor Elaine Squeri says, however, that one barrier to placing women is their own attitudes; the women over 40 may fear or not want to seek employment because of their position in their community and lack of familial support for having a job outside of the home. She recommends support groups, but not ones only from an American perspective. She also notes the common child care and transportation obstacles.

Miami's Haitian American Community Association

The Haitian American Community Association of Dade County, Inc. (HACAD), a social service, non-profit agency, directly and indirectly assists Haitians in finding employment. Direct services are education and job placement. Project Mainstream, which began in July 1982 with grants from CETA Title IIB, provides the education--instruction in ESL, acculturation, and job-seeking and job-keeping skills. Although ESL is the core of the curriculum, the acculturation emphasis has proven essential to the project's success; Creole-speaking Haitian counselors work with instructors in the classroom by explaining concepts to the students. Project Mainstream has also run Job Clubs to help students find entry-level positions, and students are encouraged to work part-time while enrolled in the program.[15]

The second direct service housed at HACAD is the Manpower Program, which began with funds from the City of Miami. Job development, placement, and follow-up practices in 1982-83 resulted in the placement of 1032 clients of the 2326 referred; 40 percent of those hired were female. Manpower's services, like all the projects described in this chapter, are offered free of charge.[16]

If clients require vocational training, they are referred to local training centers. This system, directly providing education and employment assistance and referring clients elsewhere for vocational skills development, is typical of the programs discussed in this section.

Although HACAD's basic approach to helping its clients prepare for and obtain employment resembles other programs' methods, this program faces an unusual challenge in placing Haitians in jobs. Some employers fear acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and therefore are reluctant to hire Haitians, a group reputed to have a high incidence of the syndrome. In addition, Haitians do not share the Cubans' advantage in having an ethnic enclave ready to hire its own people in great numbers. However, these problems are offset to some degree by the Haitians' reputation as hard workers.[17]

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[15] Letter received from Lynn McPherson, Project Director, Project Mainstream, November 8, 1983, and telephone interview with Roger Biamby, Executive Director, Haitian American Community Association of Dade County, Inc., September 5, 1984.

[16] Letter received from Yoleine Eugene, Administrative Assistant, Haitian American Community Association of Dade County, Inc., November 7, 1983.

[17] McPherson and Biamby.

Community Colleges' Programs: Meeting the Needs of Community Members

Because community colleges are committed to meeting the educational needs of their surrounding communities, we conclude our discussion of programs which help female newcomers enter the labor force with a review of community colleges' efforts in this direction. Community colleges are in an excellent position to serve these women: an institution is within reasonable commuting distance for 90 percent of all people and the average tuition is $588 a year. Furthermore, their student population is 53 percent female; minorities are represented in a higher proportion than their average population rates in America, with 44 percent of all Blacks and 56 percent of all Hispanics enrolled in collegiate studies at any level attending their local community colleges; and 50 percent of all undergraduate foreign students are at community colleges. Thus, these institutions have a record of serving special groups.[18]

Community colleges' responses to the needs of these women vary, of course, for some colleges have many of these women in their community and some have none. The range of services provided is typified by three colleges. In Clinton Community College in Iowa, students (men and women) participate in ESL and non-credit classes.[19] Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria, which has many refugees and international students in its surrounding community, offers four levels of ESL plus a non-credit community service ESL class. It also has one section of an orientation class in cultural adjustment for international students only and a counselor for international students. Child care is available at no cost from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and buses run to the college day and night.[20]

Finally, Long Beach City College in California, which is in the center of Los Angeles County where an estimated 130,000 refugees reside, is the home of the ORR-funded Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program. Of the 2,000 clients, 40 percent are women, many of whom are widows who need to support themselves, and most have families large enough (three to eight children) to necessitate both the husband and wife to find jobs. Other significant facts characterize a population in need of training: 68 percent have never worked outside the home, 40 percent have less than three years of formal education, one in five has never attended school, and 98 percent receive public assistance. To facilitate their economic self-sufficiency, the project provides ESL, vocational training, employment-related activities, and a vocational guidance and career development class for refugees who are unfamiliar with career planning in America.[21]

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[18] Personal interview with Dr. Dale Parnell, President, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, October 29, 1984.

[19] Letter received from Anne A. Bowbeer, Supervisor of Developmental Studies, Clinton Community College, December 9, 1983.

[20] Telephone interview with Linda McLeod, Instructor, Northern Virginia Community College, December 6, 1983.

[21] Letter received from Jim Martois, Director, Refugee Assistance Program, November 23, 1983.

Obviously, relatively few community colleges are presently equipped to offer such extensive services.

Federal Agencies' Provisions and Policies

Thus far we have described basically four kinds of projects serving female newcomers: homebound projects, craft cooperatives, vocational training for women, and the many training programs conducted by social service agencies or community colleges which enroll both men and women. We turn now to the efforts of the federal agencies.

Women's Educational Equity Act Program

Of the five pieces of legislation and federal agencies' practices discussed in this section, the Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) Program provides for the fewest relevant services. This is perhaps because its purpose is less closely related to the issue at hand, with only one of its five priorities relating to this study's targeted population and that one not specifically concerned with employment. Thus, we would like briefly to review a few of the projects funded in response to the stated priority of developing model projects on educational equity for racial and ethnic minority women and girls. (Priorities were mandated when the Act was reauthorized in 1978 as Title IX, Part C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.)

In 1982, the Bay Area Bilingual Education League, Inc., of Oakland and Hollister, California, concluded a three-year project which provided training seminars for developing campesinas' leadership skills; the training focused on survival skills, citizen advocacy, leadership training, employment opportunities, and educational options.[22] WEEA funds also supported the development of a compendium of materials, a guide for use in women's studies and bilingual and multicultural programs, in 1983. Finally, the Organization of Chinese American Women used WEEA funds to operate its Educational Equity Program. The Organization conducted six workshops for immigrants and refugees (and others) whose lack of English language proficiency and unfamiliarity with American culture were employment obstacles. Conducted bilingually, the workshops aimed to help these women become aware of the range of career options.[23]

Department of Education's Adult Education Act and Authorized Programs

Section 302 of the Adult Education Act (Public Law 91-230, as amended) states that its purpose is to

> ...expand educational opportunities for adults and to encourage the establishment of programs of adult education that will--
>
> (1) enable all adults to acquire basic skills necessary to function in society,

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[22] Women's Educational Equity Act Program, Annual Report Fiscal Year 1982, U.S. Department of Education (Washington: 1982), p. 20.

[23] Women's Educational Equity Act Program, p. 29.

(2) enable adults who so desire to continue their education to at least the level of completion of secondary school, and

(3) make available to adults the means to secure training that will enable them to become employable, productive, and responsible citizens.

In addition, in defining adult basic education in Section 303(3), the Act acknowledges the value of this education as the means by which adults will be made "less likely to become dependent on others, and to [improve] their ability to benefit from occupational training...." In sum, then, the authors of the Act intended that people like female newcomers be served.

Three sections of the Act provide for programs which have served these women, Sections 310, 317, and 318. Section 310 authorizes the use of 10 percent of funds received by states and administered according to state plans for special projects, for example, projects employing innovative methods, systems, and materials for persons with limited English-speaking ability. Moreover, as mandated by Section 306(b)(9), state plans submitted to the Secretary of Education must describe efforts to assist participation through "flexible course schedules, convenient locations, adequate transportation, and meeting child care needs," the features essential to any program which intends to serve newly arrived women. Section 306(b)(11) requires state plans to describe efforts to provide adult education programs of instruction in English and, as necessary, in native languages. Finally, Section 306(b)(12) stipulates state plans must demonstrate efforts to examine the special educational needs of immigrants and implement programs to meet these needs.

As one Section 310 project, Cottage Crafts, is described in detail earlier in this report, we will limit our discussion of illustrative projects to a few examples.[24] In Biloxi, Mississippi, immigrants and adults with limited English language skills received ESL instruction with 310 funds. Refugees and immigrants with little or no English language facility in Oklahoma City were participants in an ESL and Bilingual/Skills Related Adult Basic Education Special Project. Two community colleges in Oregon, Mt. Hood and Portland, used 310 dollars for ESL instruction for refugees no longer eligible for ORR-funded instruction, thereby filling the gap between low-level ESL (ORR-funded) and the higher level of language required for the adult basic education program. Finally, in Princeton, West Virginia, vocational training information (that is, job-getting skills) and instruction in vocation-specific language were offered to ESL students.

The second section of the Adult Education Act which has served refugee women (and men) is Section 317, Emergency Adult Education for Indochina Refugees.[25] In

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[24] Information on 310 projects comes from the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Catalog of Adult Education Projects Fiscal Year 1983, U.S. Department of Education (Washington: 1983).

[25] Information on 317 and 318 projects comes from the Division of Adult Education Services, Final Project Performance Reports, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (Washington: 1983).

FY 1981-1982, fifteen discretionary grants were awarded for the purpose of helping refugees acquire the basic skills in English necessary to function in society and improve their employability. These programs generally offered ESL, "life skills" (survival skills as basic as how to flush a toilet and turn on a light switch), and employment-related information such as American work habits. Supportive services were usually provided through linkages with social service agencies; typical services were help with filling out forms for a Social Security card, transportation, and health care. Not surprisingly, volunteer help made supplemental opportunities available; volunteers tutored homebound students in ESL, taught students how to fill out Social Security and tax forms and the like, and provided supportive services such as transportation to job interviews.

The success of these programs is difficult to assess, for as one project director explained, data collection efforts were hindered by the students' coming and going without notice, because of their job and personal responsibilities.

In the final reports on the programs, project directors made enlightening recommendations. They said more language and vocational training should be available because employment is the refugees' single greatest need; ESL, they explained, was of paramount importance because refugees could not find employment without improving their speaking ability. As for the delivery of services, project directors proposed that effective programs be scheduled to accomodate working students' schedules, have small classes for individualizing instruction, and be held within walking distance of refugees' home or housed where students can have access to transportation. They also commented upon the need for counseling.

Section 317 has been rescinded.

The third of the three relevant sections of the Adult Education Act is Section 318, Adult Education Programs for Adult Immigrants. This section provides for grants and contracts for 1) programs in reading, math, promotion of literacy, 2) educational support services, counseling with regard to educational, career, and employment opportunities, and 3) special projects to develop occupational and related skills. In fiscal years 1981, 1982, and 1983 contracts were awarded for "Immigrant projects," "Haitian projects," and "Cuban projects." Activities included ESL, VESL, "life coping" and survival skills, employment-related skills, cultural orientation, and employment services (job development, placement, and follow-up). Typically, classes were small (fifteen to twenty students) and were arranged to accomodate the students' work schedules. Ancillary services, often possible through linkages with other agencies, included counseling (personal, legal, financial, and the like) and native-language seminars on topics such as household appliances, transportation, child care, and emergency relief. Again, volunteers were helpful in several projects.

Although some projects did arrange for transportation and child care, these two supportive services were not always provided to the extent needed. For example, lack of transportation caused one project to lose clients, while it threatened the very existence of another project, according to its director. Directors also noted that access to public transportation is not always the solution, for some students cannot afford it. Furthermore, funding cutbacks affecting some social service agencies resulted in their not being able to continue to provide transportation. (Note again the impact of the economy.) In sum, for several reasons, transportation was a problem.

Project directors underlined the importance of having child care available if women are to participate in programs. Indeed, the New Jersey Department of Education's final report emphasized the need for child care services by pointing to the fact that two-thirds of the female clients were unemployed and thus in need of more career counseling and child care to allow them to take advantage of the counseling.

Addressing the remaining needs of students, project directors strongly supported more ESL classes, with some explaining that one year of instruction was insufficient for acculturation and employment and others noting long waiting lists. Many directors also commented upon the need for VESL, vocational training projects with ESL, and more vocational skills training opportunities. Other remaining needs identified were job-readiness classes, classes leading to a general equivalency diploma, and career and personal counseling. It would appear, then, that project directors found a need to continue and expand upon the services funded under the authority of Secton 318.

Unfortunately, there have been no funds appropriated for Section 318 projects since 1981. The Department of Education prefers to reserve 318 for emergencies, to respond to sudden influxes of immigrants, and instead to channel funds into the states based on their state plans (described above) so that programs are "institutionalized" and do not end with the completion of 318 contracts.

In general, it appears that while many newcomers have been served, there are many who have not had access to the progams they need. Moreover, people continue to enter America with the same needs as the earlier arrivals have, but there is not new funding. One question suggests itself: if newcomers are not served now, what will be the cost to society tomorrow?

Department of Education's Vocational Education Act and Authorized Programs*

Under the authority of the Vocational Education Act (Title I, Part B, Subpart 3), available funds may be used for bilingual vocational training because, as stated in Section 181,

> Congress hereby finds that one of the most acute problems in the United States is that which involves millions of citizens, both children and adults, whose efforts to profit from vocational education are severely restricted by their limited English-speaking ability....[and that such persons] suffer the hardships of unemployment and underemployment.

The goal of bilingual vocational training (BVT) is to help people acquire vocational skills and learn to speak and understand English well enough to compete in the job market.[26]

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[26] Information on these programs comes from the Office of Education, Opportunities in Bilingual Vocational Training, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (Washington: n.d.).

*Since the drafting of this report, the Act was reauthorized as the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984. Also, citation for bilingual vocational training is now Title IV, Part E.

These programs serve immigrants, but not exclusively. Each program has two components: instruction in language and instruction in vocational skills. Projects have offered vocational instruction in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Russian and several Indian languages, but the majority have been in Spanish. As the students' facility with the English language improves, the use of English for vocational instruction increases.

Projects are developed with the surrounding community's occupational needs in mind, and have trained persons as auto mechanics, banking and accounting paraprofessionals, chefs, carpenters, clerical workers, and nurse and geriatric aides, among others. Because a detailed portrait of one BVT project, HACER's Bilingual Microcomputer Training, is given above, we will not develop other project examples here.

However, we would like to mention the fact that under Title I of the Vocational Education Act, BVT projects may provide training allowances. In many cases, trainees are paid a weekly allowance which is based on the current minimum wage, with adjustments for certain conditions such as the presence of dependent children. Additional allowances which may be provided can cover the cost of meals, transportation, and emergencies. Thus, given the nature of these projects' training services and the existence of funds for support, BVT programs deserve further attention from policy makers committed to helping female newcomers develop the skills they need to obtain jobs.

Department of Labor's Job Training Partnership Act

The purpose of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is to make available job training for persons who are economically disadvantaged and for others who face barriers to employment so that they can obtain employment and achieve economic self-sufficiency. The Act provides for a nationwide system of training programs which are locally developed. Service delivery areas (SDAs) receive funds from the governors, and chief elected officials (CEOs) within the SDAs appoint members to private industry councils (PICs) which provide policy guidance for and exercise oversight of the job training plan.

In essence, CEOs and PICs determine what services will be offered and to whom. Under Title IIA, allowable services include institutional skill training, on-the-job training, remedial education, literacy training, programs to develop work habits, job counseling, and other employment-related activities. Newcomers who are legal residents and meet the eligibility standards may be JTPA-program participants. Moreover, JTPA does provide excellent opportunities for some female newcomers because, as Section 203 (a)(2) states, up to 10 percent of the participants do not have to be economically disadvantaged if they face a barrier to employment such as limited English-speaking ability—clearly the greatest obstacle for newcomer women. Indeed, as the National Governors' Association's analysis of JTPA relative to refugees points out, "JTPA programs are obvious sources of the skill training which many refugees need."[27]

However, that does not mean refugees or entrants or immigrants will be served by JTPA to the extent needed. The problem is the phenomenon called "creaming," directing assistance to people who are the easiest and least expensive to train and place in jobs. Why? SDAs will be sensitive to how many people should be placed in jobs according to performance standards issued by the Secretary of Labor, as adjusted by the states based on demographic and economic differences and participants to be served. These standards include the average wage at placement and the cost per person entering employment. SDAs will be conscious of needing to place clients—and women with low levels of English skills are not among those most easily or quickly placed. Incidentally, the state can set aside 6 percent of its funds to provide incentive grants to SDAs that exceed their performance standards, possibly another reason for creaming.

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[27] CRS, Incorporated, "Some Opportunities for JTPA: Serving Refugees" (Washington: National Governors' Association, n.d.), p. 13.

A second related cause of creaming is the tendency of SDAs to opt for performance-based contracts with service providers. When SDAs contract for services, they can elect to pay for training, or make partial payment for training and the rest upon placement, or—and this is a performance-based contract—pay only upon placement. Unfortunately, the last choice, the one which promotes creaming, is attractive because of JTPA's regulations concerning administrative and training costs. Under JTPA, only 15 percent of monies available may be used for administrative costs. Seventy percent of funds must be used for training. Recruitment, screening, assessment, ancillary services, and placement are non-training costs. However, with performance-based contracts, these costs can be "assigned" (unofficially) to training. Therefore, SDAs have considerable incentive to use performance-based contracts, and, unfortunately, these contracts are disincentives for serving female newcomers.

Already creaming has been obvious. Director of Houston's PIC Maggie Banks explains:

> Right now we have 10,000 people applying for assistance, and only 300 JTPA positions to offer them. Who do you think we are going to choose from that applicant group when they all meet the eligibility criteria? Isn't it going to be those most likely to be successfully placed in jobs at the end of their training, given the performance requirements imposed on us by DOL and the state? If we don't do it this way we are going to lose the contract.[28]

But creaming is not female newcomers' only obstacle to gaining access to JTPA programs. For example, in Los Angeles County, the policy to restrict JTPA training to general assistance (state welfare) recipients was claimed to discriminate against women. More than 80 percent of the general assistance population is male, while recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children are predominately single females. A lawsuit and complaint to the California Job Training Coordinating Council were filed challenging Los Angeles' policy. Then, over several months, the allocation plan was altered, reducing to 25 percent the portion targeted for general assistance recipients.

Another problem has to do with supportive services and stipends—obvious needs of this group. Although Section 4(24) of the Act authorizes "supportive services which are necessary to enable an individual eligible for training...to participate in training" and defines these services as including transportation, health care, meals, temporary shelter, child care, and the like, service deliverers generally do not provide them. Indeed, the National Governors' Association's report characterizes these programs' supportive services as "no longer available or severely limited."[29] The report identifies the 15 percent ceiling for administrative costs and 70 percent for training as the cause, for this formula leaves little money for supportive services. Not surprisingly, then, an early survey of selected JTPA sites found that one third had actually reduced the allocation to a level below that which the Act authorizes.[30] Furthermore, even this support is available for a limited time--six months after employment is begun, according to Section 204(11).

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[28] "Major JTPA Problems for Youth in Houston, Women in Los Angeles" Jobs Watch Alert, October 24, 1983, p. 2.

The other need of female newcomers is stipends, called needs-based payments under JTPA (Section 204(27)). They are available at the discretion of the SDAs. If an SDA does choose to provide such support, which is not often the case, it tends to be less than significant. For instance, in an SDA draft for administrative guidelines, North Dakota proposes this formula:

(number of weeks of training x \$55) - other resources = payment

If a client is enrolled in a 36-week program, receives no AFDC but does have a Pell grant, her payment would figure as follows:

(36 weeks x \$55) - \$1100 = \$880

Then, \$880 is divided by 36, so the person actually receives \$24.44 a week.[31]

Another illustration comes from Mobile County, Alabama, where the PIC adopted a policy of providing all participants with \$1 an hour for training-related expenses. Unfortunately, just bus fare to and from the training site costs \$1.40.[32]

Obviously, then, there are obstacles for refugee, entrant, and immigrant women implicit in JTPA's guidelines. However, at least one service provider, Lutheran Ministries of Georgia-Atlanta, has used JTPA funds to provide on-the-job training for refugees. Supplemental services (job counseling, orientation, referral, placement, and follow-up) are funded by the Department of Human Resources.[33]

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[29] CRS, Incorporated, p. 3.

[30] "First JTPA Impact Assessment Issued," Jobs Watch Alert, June 25, 1984, p. 14.

[31] Needs-Based Payments, Implementing the Job Training Partnership Act: Information Exchange (Washington: National Governors' Association, August 4, 1983), n. pag.

[32] "New JTPA Problems Brewing in Alabama, Arizona, and New Hampshire," Jobs Watch Alert, January 11, 1984, p. 3.

[33] Letter received from Barbara Maltzahn, Program Manager for Employment Services, Lutheran Ministries, Georgia-Atlanta, November 11, 1983.

Still, one project hardly constitutes access to JTPA. And this situation is significant, for JTPA is to the 1980s what CETA was to the 1970s and the Manpower Development Training Act to the 1960s. If JTPA is going to prove a viable means for helping newcomers achieve economic self-sufficiency, then advocates must make PICs sensitive to their needs and potential. The governors, state job training coordinating councils, state JTPA staffs, state legislators, chief elected officials, SDA staff, and particularly the PICs, must be made aware of these women's needs and capacity for training and obtaining employment. Short of revising the Act, advocacy and education appear to be the answers.

Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee Act of 1980

The Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended by the Refugee Act of 1980, established the Office of Refugee Resettlement within the Department of Health and Human Services and, in Section 412(a) mandates the Director of ORR

> ...to the extent of available appropriations, (A) make available sufficient resources for employment training and placement in order to achieve economic self-sufficiency among refugees as quickly as possible, (B) provide refugees with the opportunity to acquire sufficient English language training to enable them to become effectively resettled as quickly as possible,...(D) insure that women have the same opportunities as men to participate in training and instruction.

The mission of ORR is clear: to help refugees become resettled and achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

To fulfill its mission, ORR sponsors the Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP), which is planned and administered by the states. States submit plans for their programs and name a state refugee coordinator. Funds go to the states for the provision of cash and medical assistance and social services, and state refugee coordinators may contract for services (including language instruction and job placement services) with voluntary agencies, mutual assistance associations, and non-profit organizations.

Specific ORR-funded and state-administered programs that are intended to help refugee women enter the labor force are described earlier in this report (see discussions of Los Angeles Unified School District's Refugee Employment Training Project, Arlington, Virginia's Refugee Education and Employment Program, and Long Beach City College's Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program). Therefore, to avoid redundancy and continue this section's focus on the larger picture, we will concern ourselves here with the overall effectiveness of ORR programs for facilitating refugees' economic self-sufficiency.

To assess ORR's efforts, we will first look at what is being funded, then at ORR's own evaluation of refugees' movement toward self-sufficiency, and finally at the General Accounting Office's report on the Indochinese Refugee Resettlement Program.

It is obvious that ORR has indeed sought to make available funds for projects in line with its mandate. In fiscal year 1982, $2.8 million was allocated for national discretionary projects.[34] Of the forty projects funded, several were related to employment opportunities. For example, four refugee outplacement programs for developing and testing models for employment and job placement activities were funded. Also receiving funds were projects using mutual assistance associations (MAAs) as employment service providers, projects providing technical assistance to MAAs in business development and management, and projects designed to encourage MAAs' delivery of job orientation, job development, training, and emergency services.[35]

However, much more significant (in terms of resources allocated) is ORR's channeling of funds to the states for their programs. In 1982, of the $642.8 million available to the states, approximately $64.6 million was used for ESL and employment-related services (counseling, placement, and vocational training).[36] These two services were designated by ORR as priority services for helping refugees achieve self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. Of the 420 purchase-of-service contracts made in FY 1982, 90 percent were for these two priorities alone or in conjunction with other services.[37] Thus, ORR's commitment to achieving its mandated goal is evident.

But what can be said of the effectiveness of these programs and other ORR projects? In its 1982 report to Congress, ORR explains that "the adjustment process may be more difficult than had previously been the case," citing characteristics of the refugees (such as health, age, and family responsibilities) that make it unreasonable to expect them to work and the American economy (with its lack of readily available jobs) as obstacles to achieving ORR's goal.[38]

The General Accounting Office (GAO), however, takes another view of the situation in its report "Greater Emphasis on Early Employment and Better Monitoring Needed in Indochinese Refugee Resettlement Program." The report identifies several problems hindering refugees' achievement of self-sufficiency, but holds that foremost among these is the lack of employment assistance given to the newly arrived. Service providers are faulted for giving higher priority to ESL and other training than to employment services alone or concurrent with training.[39] Arguing that low levels of English proficiency do not appear to be an insurmountable barrier to employment and that, according to committee reports resulting from Congressional hearings on the Refugee Assistance Amendents of 1982, lack of proficiency is not a basis for postponing employment, the report recommends an emphasis on employment concurrent with ESL and/or training.[40]

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[34] Office of Refugee Resettlement, Refugee Resettlement Program: Report to Congress, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Washington: 1983), p. 13.

[35] Office of Refugee Resettlement, pp. 14-15.

[36] Office of Refugee Resettlement, p. 5.

[37] Office of Refugee Resettlement, p. 9.

[38] Office of Refugee Resettlement, p. 22.

[39] The report also discusses lack of employment assistance from two non-ORR sources. Based on a five-county sample, the report concludes that voluntary agencies provide limited employment services and state employment agencies provide little assistance for refugees.

Not all service providers agree with the GAO's analysis of what ORR's state programs should emphasize. Edwin B. Silverman, Manager of the Refugee Resettlement Program in Illinois, comments that "The study seems to suggest...that counseling, orientation, and ESL are unimportant to job placement activities. In fact, those services are almost essential for competitive job search and for effective, long-term employment [italics in original]".[41] Silverman's position is supported by Texas State Coordinator John D. Townsend: "It appears to be that the report feels that job placement is easily done without basic language proficiency or training for skills. I do not believe that this is really a valid assumption."[42] Townsend takes exception to what he perceives as GAO's point of view that "resettlement means something of a 'quick-fix' solution. It has been our experience that ESL and vocational training have been successful in leading to employment and ongoing self-sufficiency and self-support."[43]

Silverman's and Townsend's comments on the GAO report are useful for summarizing and analyzing ORR's efforts. First, both commentors address, implicitly or explicitly, the "quick fix" issue. ORR's mandate—to help refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible—is emphasized in the Refugee Act of 1980, Refugee Assistance Amendments of 1982, and August 16, 1982 ORR statement of program goals, priorities, and standards effective as of fiscal year 1983. Indeed, the very number of times this mandate is mentioned in this report should suggest its status as a national goal and priority. Yet, Silverman's and Townsend's comments raise the questions, "Is this mandate, even if achieved, desirable? Are the goals of long-term self-sufficiency and reduced welfare dependency being served?" Wells C. Klein, responding to the GAO report on behalf of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies, Inc., argues that "early or 'quick' employment is not necessarily to be equated with self-sufficiency, particularly if refugees assume entry-level jobs that may not provide adequate support for a family.[44]

Several statements are necessary to summarize this complex issue: 1) ORR does appear to be committed to fulfilling its mission; funding priorities are supportive evidence; 2) GAO does not believe enough emphasis is placed on early employment; 3) some service providers disagree with GAO's contention about what training refugees need in order to find employment; and 4) some service providers take issue with the assumption that early employment is unquestionably desirable, because long-term self-sufficiency may not be served by the "quick fix."

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[40] U.S. General Accounting Office, Greater Emphasis on Early Employment and Better Monitoring Needed in Indochinese Refugee Resettlement Program (Washington: March 1, 1983), pp. iii-iv.

[41] U.S. General Accounting Office, p. 76.

[42] U.S. General Accounting Office, p. 82.

[43] U.S. General Accounting Office, p. 80.

[44] U.S. General Accounting Office, p. 89.

The second use of Silverman's and Townsend's responses to GAO's findings concerns estimating the value of ESL as a tool for helping refugees find employment. While they underline its importance, picking up on a thread woven throughout this report, GAO holds that lack of basic language profiency is not cause for postponing employment. The report recommends ESL instruction be available for employed persons and persons in training programs. In fact, many ORR programs do offer ESL classes to accomodate students' work schedules. However, if a person spends 20 hours a week in ESL classes and is also enrolled in training or other orientation classes, not much time is left for employment. At any rate, it appears that the difference of opinion here revolves around a matter of emphasis; no one claims ESL is unnecessary, but neither is there agreement about how essential it is for employment.

Finally, Silverman's and Townsend's responses to the GAO report provide a platform for assessing certain strengths and weaknesses of RRPs. In describing what services they believe refugees need—counseling, orientation, and ESL—they actually summarize the key features of RRPs. The findings in this report, confirmed by the National Governors' Association's study, indicate that the thrust of RRPs is ESL, acculturation, and employment services.[45]

However, while both commentors also mention the need for vocational skills training, such training has been found to be "limited or nonexistent in most RRP projects."[46] In sum, RRP projects appear to be very strong in supportive services, but less so in vocational training. Granted, RRPs may refer persons elsewhere for training, but the more likely case is that they are placed in dead-end jobs and jobs that cannot provide incomes to support a family. Again, the questions surface: Will refugees become self-sufficient and will self-sufficiency be long-term?

Perhaps one resource for help in the near future is already taking formation. In FY 1983, ORR awarded Targeted Assistance Grants for services for refugees and entrants (two sets of grants, one for refugees and one for entrants) in areas of high concentration. Not surprisingly, the purpose of these grants is to help refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency and reduce welfare dependency. Intended to supplement available resources, the grants may be used to support job development and placement, business and employer incentives (for example, on-site orientation and VESL), business technical assistance, short-term training, and on-the-job training—activities to enhance refugees' employment potential. Need-based payments are allowable, as are supportive services such as child care and transportation.

It is too early to ascertain the value of these projects, but an indication of what these locally determined projects may offer is evident in one targeted area's plan. In Arlington County, Virginia, service providers developed their program by first identifying "gaps" in the existing service delivery. Based on that assessment, they determined which agency should provide which services. The most significant aspect of this program is the introduction of skills training to be provided by four organizations. Other services, such as language training and health screening, are perhaps less noteworthy, only because they have been much-discussed earlier in this report. Again, even though the value of these projects will have to be assessed at a later date, the relatively greater emphasis on skills training in this one project bodes well.

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[45] CRS, Incorporated, p. 2.

[46] CRS, Incorporated, p. 2.

Chapter 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to synthesize the preceding discussions of the strategies for helping newcomer women enter the labor force and become contributing members of their new society. The reader will note that the recommendations that appear below are presented earlier in this report—implicitly in the statistical portraits of the newcomer populations and explicitly in the dialogue proceedings. They are restated here as a form of "mental underlining" that allows the reader to distinguish them from the mass of details, figures, and anecdotal evidence that is used in their support.

The recommendations are organized into two sections. First are the major recommendations, the calls for action which, if implemented, would remove the most serious impediments to the economic and social adjustment of all newcomer women. The second set of recommendations, while no less important than the first, responds to the special needs of segments of the newcomer population.

Major Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Providing Training Programs

The single greatest need is for programs that develop newcomer women's language skills, vocational skills, and employability skills. Without these programs, the notion of their achieving economic self-sufficiency is no more than a pipe dream. Furthermore, while their lack of marketable job skills and negligible understanding of the American world of work create serious barriers, it appears to be their limited English language proficiency that constitutes the major obstacle. These handicaps result in the women's being unemployed or employed in dead-end, minimum-wage jobs. Whether they are single heads of household or one of two workers whose incomes are needed to support a large household, the consequence is the same: no independence from cash assistance programs and thus no genuine, long-term economic self-sufficiency.

The recommended programs should povide the following: instruction in ESL (and vocational ESL as needed); lessons in employability skills, including job-getting skills, job-keeping skills, and occupational awareness; acculturation and orientation classes, with instruction in survival skills as needed; and vocational training for entry-level positions. Good models for these programs are the projects that are sponsored by the Office of Refugee Resettlement; they differ from the proposed programs only in that they generally make referrals for vocational training, as opposed to including it in their own curricula.

In addition, training programs must be accessible in terms of their location, their cost, and the times classes are offered. Finally, they should be of sufficient duration, perhaps a minimum of one year, so that all of the skills listed above can actually be mastered.

Programs like these should help the majority of newcomer women. Furthermore, they can be adjusted and tailored to meet the special needs of segments of the newcomer populations. (The specific details involved are presented in the sections on the dialogue proceedings and elsewhere in this report.)

Recommendation #2: Improving Job Training Partnership Act Programs

The major source of training during the 1980s should be programs authorized by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). JTPA is fashioned so as to include the features needed by newcomer women for their occupational training, but as it is currently being implemented in some areas, it does not serve them well. Among the problems that are discussed earlier in this report, the chief one seems to be "creaming," which is often prompted by performance-based contracts. If service providers are paid upon placing their clients, then they have every incentive to select participants who are the "cream of the crop," that is, the easiest to place. Why offer ESL classes, which are time-consuming and expensive, when there are 100 JTPA candidates who do not need ESL? Furthermore, because there are many candidates who can participate in JTPA programs without the support of needs-based payments, or stipends, which most newcomer women need, then why should a service provider set aside a portion of the funding for stipends? For these reasons and others, it may be said that newcomer women need JTPA programs, but JTPA programs do not need newcomer women.

This is not to say that JTPA cannot serve newcomer women. Actually, it should be an excellent source of training. Because the legislation establishes locally controlled private industry councils that have tremendous influence on what kinds of programs are funded, there is great opportunity for newcomer women and their advocates to have an impact. For this to happen, the private industry councils must be educated about the newest members of their community so that they not only understand their potential to become economically self-sufficient, but also know what kinds of programs they need. In addition, the locally elected officials, who appoint the members of the private industry councils, should be similarly "lobbied" on behalf of newcomer women. But effective advocacy requires training. Therefore, advocacy training programs should be made available to the dedicated service providers and others who are committed to helping newcomer women.

Recommendation #3: Providing Child Care and Transportation

The best training and employment opportunities are worthless if newcomer women cannot take advantage of them because they have no one to stay with their children. Even looking for a job is impossible for women who do not have access to child care.

Lack of child care services—the magnitude of this problem is recorded throughout this report and is especially well documented in the dialogue proceedings. Thus, a lengthy review of the obstacle created by the lack of services is not necessary here. What should be reiterated are the recommendations for developing suitable child care services. First, the services must be affordable. Women who earn the minimum wage cannot pay $25.00, $50.00, or $75.00 a week for child care. Second, services should be available during the evening hours as well as the daytime so that women can work or attend classes at night. Third, the facilities must be in an accessible location. Some women cannot take advantage of child care services simply because they do not have any means of transportation to the daycare center. The ideal situation would be to have child care facilities at the work site or school. If this is not possible, then an alternative is to provide a "pick-up" service from the child's home to the daycare center. The pick-up service would also give women the free hours they need to apply for jobs, meet with their caseworkers, and in general fulfill all of their responsibilities as wife, mother, student, and worker. A third choice, last because it seems to be the most difficult to implement, would be to provide the women with money or tokens for using their local mass transit system (if there is one available and if they are sufficiently acculturated to use it).

Earlier in this report there are several other recommendations made, such as expanding the services for infant care and having culturally appropriate services for Southeast Asians, but the major criteria of an effective child care system are those given above. The need for affordable and accessible child care services cannot be overstated.

The other support service needed is transportation. Again, what good are training and employment opportunities if the women cannot travel to them? How can they apply for jobs if it takes them most of their time just to reach the potential employers' offices? Recommendations concerning transportation are similar to those for child care: make training available at the work site (so the need for transportation is reduced if not eliminated), institute a pick-up service, and provide women with the knowledge and financial resources to use the mass transit system.

Recommendation #4: Improving the Collection of Data

Policy makers and service providers have an obvious need for a database that is as complete as possible. The major problem in developing an adequate population profile of female newcomers is that all too often the data are not disaggregated by sex. Indeed, so frequently is this the case that in general the notation "none of these data are available by sex" was frequently eliminated from the first three chapters of this report simply to avoid redundancy.

At this time, however, at least a cursory review of the "gaps" in the data is appropriate. For all of this study's populations, the data on their educational attainment and English language fluency are not broken down by sex. Similarly, figures for the women's utilization of social support services are virtually nonexistent, except for the studies of services for women only, such as maternal health care. In addition to these across-the-board gaps is the absence of figures for certain characteristics of each of the populations. For example, data on the states of destination for Southeast Asian refugees are not tabulated by sex, and for the Cuban and Haitian entrants, studies of their occupational distribution do not present findings by sex.

Furthermore, even the most useful of studies provides limited information when sex is not a variable. Consider the excellent Portland State study, for instance. It showed that a higher proportion of female heads of household was associated with reduced labor force participation rates, a higher proportion "not looking" for a job, and higher welfare dependency rates. However, after two tables in which sex was a variable, it disappeared from the study. Seven graphs analyzing labor force participation were presented and none of the variables were disaggregated by sex.

How the data are collected presents other problems for the people who need a profile of immigrant, refugee, and entrant women. For many studies the original data collection efforts were performed in such a way that often precludes a later researcher from re-analyzing the responses and achieving separate or representative profiles by sex. Also, when studies focus on heads of household, it means that at best only one woman will be interviewed for every four men, if one assumes a 20 percent female head of household rate. Thus, issues related to the female population are less well delineated than those for men.

Given the fact that most researchers know that the descriptive social statistics for women differ from those for men, one wonders about the roots of the dearth of useful data. Perhaps it stems from researchers' desire to be economical with time, money, and report pages. Perhaps it reflects a lack of sensitivity to the problems of sexism in social research. Or, perhaps it indicates the influence of the belief that it is the male who is the actor in society at large, the woman a bystander with considerably less effect on her environment. One can only speculate about the causes.

The consequences, on the other hand, are by no means uncertain. Policy makers are generally unimpressed with anecdotal evidence. They want numbers. Therefore, it is recommended that studies disaggregate data by sex. Researchers and statisticians should operate on the assumption that the reader can add the male and female figures; what the reader cannot do is disaggregate. In addition, studies should include a sufficient number of women in their samples so that the special needs of women can be documented.

One of the government agencies which can do the most to improve the present situation is the Office of Refugee Resettlement. In its annual report to Congress, the Office of Refugee Resettlement has an excellent opportunity to make politicians aware of the status and needs of refugee women. This office should expand upon the analysis of the surveys it commissions so that sufficient data are available. Also useful to policy makers would be breakdowns of the data by the ethnic background of Southeast Asian refugees.

The contribution to be made by the Immigration and Naturalization Service is less clear. While INS is not primarily a statistical gathering agency, it does publish yearbooks, and in the future researchers should find in them more help than they currently provide. The problem for a researcher today is that due to a mechanical loss of data tapes, tabulations including certain variables--one of which is sex--are not available for immigrants admitted in fiscal years 1980 and 1981, the most recently published yearbooks. This problem should be short-lived, but another one will not be. That is the loss of a major pool of data reachable by researchers, the alien registration data. Now discontinued, it had provided an immediate picture of geographic concentration and dispersal, the information basic to making decisions about where to target programs and resources, and because addresses were available, it could have made follow-up surveys possible.

In addition, the Census Bureau, typically an outstanding source of statistical information, has little to offer with reference to the study of new wave women, because a great portion of the influx came after the 1980 census was taken.

The value of adequate data collection efforts will grow, not decrease, if populaton projections are to be believed. Addressing the issue of the immigrant population in America, researchers contend that it will be an "increasingly significant component" of the total population increase.[1] If improving services begins with advocacy, then the time to advocate for better data gathering and analysis is now.

In addition to the need for more data, greater coordination in the collection of data is desirable. For example, coordinating the data collection efforts in refugee camps and in the United States would make longitudinal studies possible. Such studies could document the interrelationships among various socioeconomic variables. Of great interest would be a study following refugees' English development starting in the camps. A related concern is the lack of one central clearinghouse for research on immigration and refugee affairs. This means that most researchers will not have access to some useful studies, such as the needs assessments performed by local governments. A practicial solution is to augment the budget of the Refugee Policy Center in Washington, D.C., which already has an estimable library. The funds could be used for a staff person who could contact all voluntary agencies, state offices of planning and health, county and metropolitan offices of planning and health, and university centers of ethnic studies once a month or a quarter to collect information.

Other Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Planning with Diversity in Mind

Not all Southeast Asians are Vietnamese. Not all women are middle-aged. Yet some programs and policies would seem to deny these facts.

To improve the program opportunities for Southeast Asian women, policy makers need to be educated about the diversity within their number. This report identifies, for example, the special needs of the Laotians, particularly the H'mong, and the Cambodians based on the statistics for their literacy and employment rates. The informed policy makers can create appropriate opportunities for their training. They will also know where to target the resources based on the groups' geographic dispersal patterns. Other illustrations of how to plan programs with diversity in mind include this report's discussions of the needs of the homebound Southeast Asian woman, the younger woman whose schooling was interrupted in Southeast Asia because of the war, and the woman who needs to be recertified in her profession. (The last of these three is true for newcomer women other than the Southeast Asians.)

The most efficient and effective use of resources is made when policies rest on a good knowledge base. What is needed to help a diverse group of people we call newcomer women assimilate? Some of them can profit from participating in the projects for the homebound woman, while others would benefit from joining a craft cooperative. The point here is simply that when programs are being planned for the majority of newcomer

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[1] Amara Bachu and Martin O'Connell, "Developing Current Fertility Indicators for Foreign-Born Women from the Current Population Survey," paper presented at the Population Association of America, Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 3-5, 1984, p. 1.

women, the special needs of segments of this population should not be ignored. Educating policy makers will mean that the vulnerable members of our society are served and that our limited resources are used wisely.

Recommendation #2: Expanding Mental Health Services

Southeast Asian refugee women are subject to multiple stresses stemming from the traumas of flight and the changes in their roles after their resettlement here in America. They need access to culturally appropriate mental health services.

Recommendation #3: Creating Housing

More housing should be developed in Brownsville, Texas. The scarcity of units available to the Hispanic women in that town affects every aspect of their lives, including their participation in the labor force. This situation is a good example of the need to correct social problems that seem to be unrelated to newcomer women's economic and social adjustment but are in fact central to their movement into the mainstream of American life.

Recommendation #4: Improving the Nature and Delivery of Welfare Benefits

Some welfare regulations appear to be disincentives to persons who would otherwise prefer working to receiving welfare assistance. For instance, in California the 100-hour rule which dictates that a person cannot receive benefits after having worked 100 hours seems innocuous, even reasonable. However, it is a disincentive for the person who has a minimum-wage job that does not provide medical benefits. This person is less able to provide for her dependents and herself if she works than if she stays on welfare. A related example comes from Texas, where a person loses benefits after having worked several months. Some people panic and quit their jobs; others are laid off or lose their jobs for other reasons and then have to survive somehow until their benefits are reinstated. These rules need to be reconsidered.

Also, the delivery of services needs to be improved. This can be done by educating service providers about their clients so that, for example, the problems described in the dialogue about Hispanic immigrants can be avoided. If social service workers had known about the Hispanic woman's practice of not offering information unless asked directly for it, then services could be delivered in less time and, therefore, at a lower cost. This is just one illustration of the positive relationship between education and effective service delivery.

In addition, as was made evident during each of the dialogues, often the newcomer women do not understand what services are available to them, and obviously they cannot seek out services if they do not know they qualify for them. Therefore, service providers should make the dissemination of information a higher priority than it appears to be now. (Although this recommendation is made in the context of welfare, it applies as well to other services.) Furthermore, service providers outside of welfare agencies have a great need for lucid explanations of assistance programs, if the confusion about regulations which they expressed during the dialogues is any indication.

Recommendation #5: Clarifying the Legal Status of Entrants

Cuban and Haitian entrants need to be taken out of their legal limbo. As entrants, they cannot vote. Moreover, they are denied some of the very services they need in order to assimilate. Maintaining the status quo helps neither them nor their receiving society.

Recommendation #6: Reconsidering the Plight of Undocumented Hispanic Women

The last recommendation is the least concrete, simply because the problem under consideration is not easily solved. That is, what should be done about the many undocumented women? They are allowed to live in America because they have children born here, but they themselves are not eligible for the adjustment assistance and services they so clearly need. They cannot work, and they cannot receive any form of assistance for themselves. Their survival is based in part on the Aid to Families with Dependent Children and the food stamps they can receive for their children. As difficult as it is for them to raise their children, their situation is aggravated when the children are grown and on their own. It is as easy a problem to document as it is difficult to solve. These women have lived in America for years, they intend to stay here, and yet they have no way to support themselves. Interestingly, during the dialogue in which this issue was raised--when participants knew they could make a recommendation with no concern for its feasibility--recommendations were not offered. This indicates not only the serious approach taken to the identification of realistic recommendations, but also the complexity of the issue. What can be recommended is that this problem be analyzed, that it receive the attention it deserves.

In closing, the reader is asked to consider these recommendations with three facts in mind. First, they address the most important concerns of individuals and agencies involved in the assimilation process of newcomer women; additional recommendations that are more limited in their scope are presented earlier in this report, particularly in the sections on the dialogue proceedings. Second, some of the recommendations respond to issues that may appear at first to be unrelated to the economic adjustment of the newcomers, such as the need for mental health services for Southeast Asian refugees, but they are in fact highly relevant. A person overwhelmed by stress may not be in a position to find employment or perform well on the job.

Finally, it is acknowledged that implementing some of the recommendations requires a commitment of financial resources. Such a commitment is necessary. The obstacles facing female Southeast Asian refugees, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and Hispanic immigrants will not disappear of their own accord. These women are in America, and they are in need. If policies and programs for facilitating their movement toward economic self-sufficiency were developed and implemented today, then tomorrow they could become contributing members of American soci

Appendix A

LEGAL STATUSES OF NEWCOMERS: IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND ENTRANTS

Newcomers in America can be immigrants, refugees, or entrants. Their legal statuses are determined by the circumstances under which they were admitted to the United States. These statuses, in turn, determine the kinds and extent of social services available to them, including those which are intended to facilitate their assimilation and self-sufficiency. Thus, in order to evaluate the programs and policies which target female newcomers, one needs first to have at least a basic understanding of their legal statuses.

Immigrant Status

Aliens are people who are not citizens or nationals of the United States, and immigrants are aliens who are lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence.

Currently, the worldwide ceiling on the number of immigrant visas available in a year is 270,000. Under this ceiling, immigrants are admitted as members of a preference category. The preference categories and their respective proportions of the overall limitation are presented below.

1. First preference--unmarried children of United States citizens, 20 percent;
2. Second preference--spouses and unmarried children of aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence, 26 percent, plus any numbers not required for the first preference;
3. Third preference--members of the professions or persons of exceptional ability in the arts and sciences, 10 percent;
4. Fourth preference--married children of United States citizens, 10 percent, plus any numbers not required by the first three preference categories;
5. Fifth preference--siblings of United States citizens 21 years of age or older, 24 percent, plus any numbers not required by the first four preference categories;
6. Sixth preference--skilled and unskilled laborers in short supply, 10 percent; and
7. Nonpreference--other immigrants who do not qualify for any of the six preferences listed above, numbers not used by the six preference categories.

Several categories of immigrants are exempt from numerical restrictions. Most are immediate relatives of United States citizens--children, spouses, and parents of citizens aged 21 or older.

Social Support Services for Immigrants

The reader will note that the chapter on Hispanic immigrants does not discuss their utilization of various social support services. There are two reasons for this. First, there simply are no programs for immigrants that are comparable to the special adjustment assistance given to other groups of newcomers. Second, although immigrants can participate in some of the welfare and job-related programs that serve United States citizens, practically no data on utilization are disaggregated by immigrant/citizen status. In general, immigrants are eligible for welfare programs, such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children, after a specified waiting period, and they are eligible for job-related programs, such as unemployment insurance. (It is difficult to generalize about immigrants' eligibility for all income transfer programs, because the regulations vary from program to program and sometimes from state to state.) However, because very few of the relevant data collection efforts use immigrant status as a variable, the data base on Hispanic immigrants' utilization of social support services is weak or nonexistent.

In this report, the newcomers who are immigrants are Hispanics--women from Mexico, South America, and Central America. The exceptions are Puerto Ricans, who are, of course, United States citizens, and Cubans, whose legal status is discussed below.

Refugee Status

According to the Refugee Act of 1980, a refugee is an alien who cannot or will not return to his home nation because he was persecuted or fears persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion. Furthermore, the refugee enters America from a country of first asylum, not his home nation, so that the United States is actually the refugee's third point in his migration process.

In addition to expanding the definition of "refugee," the Act established annual ceilings of 50,000 admissions for each of fiscal years 1980, 1981, and 1982, while also authorizing the president to adjust these ceilings in light of humanitarian concerns or the national interest. President Carter did just that in 1980 and 1981. Ceilings for later years are determined annually by the President, after consultation with the Congress.

Social Support Services for Refugees

Two other features of the Refugee Act of 1980 have a bearing on the concerns of this study. First is its continuation of the authorization of federal reimbursements to states for cash and medical assistance given to refugees. Whereas earlier legislation had not set restrictions on the period during which the states could receive federal reimbursement, this act set a 36-month limitation. Refugees who meet the regular requirements may receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Supplemental Security Income, and Medicaid, and the states receive 100 percent federal reimbursement for 36 months. Needy refugees who do not meet the categorical requirements can qualify based on a special form of eligibility. They receive cash and medical assistance, again with full federal reimbursement to the states for 36 months.

In April 1982, the regulations were changed. States could still receive 100 percent reimbursement for assistance given to refugees meeting the regular eligibility requirements for 36 months. However, for refugees who qualified based on the special eligibility criterion, the states receive full federal reimbursement for only the first 18 months of assistance. During the second 18 months, states receive federal reimbursement only for refugees meeting the states' regular criteria for participation in general assistance programs.

Finally, the Act established the Office of Refugee Resettlement to fund and administer assistance programs for refugees:

> The Director [of ORR] is authorized to make grants to, and enter into contracts with, public or private nonprofit agencies for projects specifically designed-
>
> (1) to assist refugees in obtaining the skills which are necessary for economic self-sufficiency, including projects for job training, employment services, day care, professional refresher training, and other recertification services;
>
> (2) to provide training in English where necessary (regardless of whether the refugees are employed or receiving cash or other assisance); and
>
> (3) to provide where specific needs have been shown and recognized by the Director, health (including mental health) services, social services, educational and other service.

The refugees discussed in this report are from Southeast Asia.

Entrant Status

Until 1980, newcomers in America could be divided, roughly, into two groups, those with immigrant status and those with refugee status. However, events in 1980 prompted the creation of a third category—entrants.

In late April to early fall of 1980, the United States received approximately 125,000 Cubans from the Mariel boatlift. Because the United States was their country of first asylum, the Cubans were not eligible for domestic assistance and resettlement programs granted refugees under the Refugee Act of 1980 or such social service pograms as Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

Nor did the Refugee Act of 1980 apply to the influx of Haitians arriving daily from Haiti in small boats. The Haitians did not qualify for refugee status because they could not prove that their flight was prompted by fears of racial, religious, political, or social persecution and not for economic reasons.

Then, in June 1980, a presidential order placed both Cubans and Haitians in a special entrant category. The term "entrant" designates Cubans who entered the United States between April 21, 1980, and October 10, 1981, and Haitians who were known to the Immigration and Nationality Services prior to October 10, 1980, and who were granted a parole pending determination of their immigration status.

Social Support Services for Entrants

As entrants, these persons could now obtain work permits and public assistance benefits. Furthermore, they could receive generally the same services and the states the same cost reimbursements as for refugees.

Summary

It should be clear that a newcomer by any other name is...an immigrant, a refugee, or an entrant. The distinction is real and significant, for the policies and programs that relate to the newcomers' adjustment are tied directly to their legal status.

Appendix B

SOURCES CONTACTED FOR DATA COLLECTION

American Friends Service Committee, Cambodian Women's Project: Ellen Bruno

American University, School of Justice: Dean Rita J. Simon

American Council for Nationalities Service: Rosemary Tripp

American Council for Voluntary Agencies: Georgianna Gleason

Center for Applied Linguistics: JoAnn Crandall

City of Miami, Planning Department: David Whittington

Florida International University: Dr. Alex Stepick

Haitian Refugee Center, Miami, Florida: Steve Forrester

Intergovernmental Commission For Migration: Gretchen Brainerd

Johns Hopkins University, Department of Population Dynamics, School of Hygiene and Public Health: Dr. Kathleen Ford

Long Beach, California, Department of Public Health: Terrence Wiley

Lutheran Immigration Service: Ingrid Walters

National Association of Counties Research, Inc.: Tom Joseph

National Center for Health Statistics: Selma Taffel and Dr. Earl Huyck

New Transcentury Foundation: Dr. David North

Oregon State Refugee Office: Jerry Burno

Overseas Education Fund: Deborah McGlauflin

Refugee Data Center: Livia Farkos

Refugee Policy Group: Lee Regan and Susan Forbes

UN High Commissioner on Refugees, Washington, D.C. office: Susan Chitwood

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C.: Arthur Cresce, Peggy Payne, Patricia Johnson

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement: Nguyen Kimchi and Dr. Linda Gordon

U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, Washington, D.C.: Chris Porter

U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, New York: Dr. Susan Buchanan

U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service: Dr. Roger Kramer

University of California, San Diego: Indochinese Health & Adaptation Research Project (IHARP), Department of Sociology: Dr. John P. Anderson, County Principal Investigator

University of Florida, Center for Latin American Studies: Dr. Helen Safa

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